WORLD/ A20

Thai plane crash kills 89; 41 survive

LIFESTYLE / C1

Cancer survivor won't stop putting food, water to test

WORLD / A19

O.J. Simpson held without bail for armed robbery

SPORTS / A24

Woods clinches FedEx Cup, secures $10-M bonus

It's not his body odor but your nose, says study

DEPENDE PALA SA UMAAMOY ANG PUTOK MO!

CHICAGO—WHEN IT comes to a man's body odor, the fragrance—or stench—is in the nose of the beholder, according to US researchers, who sug-

IT'S NOT / A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Tuesday, September 18, 2007 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 282 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Palace prefers pardon for Erap over amnesty

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christian V. Esguerra

JOSEPH ESTRADA MAY BE OPEN TO BEING granted amnesty, as announced on Sunday by one of his allies, but President Macapagal-Arroyo's key advisers are not biting.

According to Sergio Apostol, Ms Arroyo's chief legal adviser, Estrada should

PALACE/ A15

Mike A flies out on eve of ZTE deal probe

By Tarra Quismundo and Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE HUSBAND OF PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo quietly left the country at sunset yesterday on the eve of the Senate investigation of the $329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project awarded to China's ZTE Corp.

Amid talk that he may be dragged into the controversial deal, Jose Miguel Arroyo was the last to board Cathay Pacific flight CX-918 some 10 minutes before the plane took off for Hong Kong at 5:55 p.m.

Doctors have advised Arroyo to stay away from stressful situations since his heart operation in April. He joined his wife on her trip to Sydney, Australia, early this month for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit. *(See "In the Know" on Page A8.)*

At the Senate hearing this morning, the "mystery man," who figures in the controversial NBN contract will be unmasked if the senators will ask about him.

Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, cofounder of Amsterdam Holdings Inc., a losing proponent of the NBN project, reiterated yesterday that he was prepared to identify the man who came to one of several meetings

MIKE A/ A8

DE VENECIA III

ABALOS

GMA men face contempt

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo gestures as she reacts to reports that the construction of the supposedly longest road linking the cities of Pagadian and Zamboanga has not been completed after 20 years.
EDWIN BACASMAS

GMA urges Senate to act on cheap drugs bill instead

By Christine O. Avendaño

DIPOLOG CITY—WITH A GIGGLE, PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo could only agree that it was better for Congress to focus its efforts on passing urgent measures like the cheaper medicines bill than on investigating cases like the "Hello Garci" controversy.

"Of course, of course," the President replied to a reporter's question on whether she preferred Congress would pay more attention to the cheaper medicines bill than conduct investigations.

Ms Arroyo was in Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur yesterday as three Senate committees resumed their inquiry into the wiretapping of telephone conversations purportedly between Ms Arroyo and ex-Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

The opposition said the wiretap during the counting of ballots cast in the 2004 presidential election was evidence Ms Arroyo had stolen the vote, a charge she has denied.

Ms Arroyo is to visit India on Oct. 4-5 and will take along with her businessmen desiring to buy cheaper drugs from the nation that sells generic medicine at half the cost of internationally known brands.

She told a town hall meeting the trip was part of her efforts to ensure that affordable medicine would be made available to the public.

These efforts, Ms Arroyo said, included the setting up of an additional 4,000 drug-

GMA URGES/ A8

Senate, Palace edge toward crisis as execs snub hearing

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Michael Lim Ubac

THE SENATE YESTERDAY moved closer to a showdown with Malacañang after government and military officials once more snubbed the "Hello Garci" hearing by invoking an executive order that had been struck down by the Supreme Court.

Senators from the administration and opposition camps said the Senate should now use its powers of contempt to order the arrest of these officials and to compel them to face the hearings.

Administration senators said it was to Malacañang's advantage to attend the hearings so it can debunk the claims made by the sole witness so far, former military intelligence agent Vidal Doble Jr.

Doble testified that he tapped the phone conversation between the President and ex-Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano. The opposition said the wiretaps were evidence Ms Arroyo stole the 2004 presidential election, a charge she has denied.

As in the Sept. 7 hearing, only Doble obeyed the Senate summons. The 10 other invited resource persons either gave excuses or simply ignored the summons.

The senators are expected to hold a caucus today to decide whether to cite in contempt former military chief of staff and now special envoy Efren Abu and retiring Rear Admiral Tirso Danga, who boycotted yesterday's hearing.

Samuel Ong, former deputy director of the National Bureau of Investigation who came out in June 2005 claiming he had the "mother of all tapes," also failed to show up yesterday. His lawyer said he was hiding

GMA MEN/ A15

FORMER T/Sgt. Vidal Doble (left), the star witness in the revived "Hello Garci" investigation, is grilled anew by members of the Senate committees on national defense, electoral reform and blue ribbon.

ROGER MARGALLO

BIR data bank to flush out cheats

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—THE TAXMAN IS COMPILING data on people's trips abroad, the vehicles and real estate they own, and the schools their children attend.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue has been building its largest data bank yet on taxpayers by culling information from the Bureau of Immigration, Land Transportation Office, Land Registration Authority, Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Education, according to Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez.

The BIR's largest tax mapping operation is designed to catch the underreported assets of every taxpayer in the country, said Suarez, chair of the House oversight committee for Republic Act No. 9480 (Tax Amnesty Act of 2007), which was implemented starting Sept. 6.

The first legislated tax amnesty requires the BIR to allow businessmen "all the leeway to clean their slates" up to March 2008.

BIR DATA/ A6

Abandoned kids find hope in foreign homes

By Jocelyn R. Uy

NOAH WAS A SICKLY YEAR-OLD baby whose movements were limited to rolling his eyes.

He might have died under the care of a fund-strapped orphanage in the Philippines had not an American couple succeeded in adopting him two weeks before his condition worsened.

Noah was afflicted with a heart ailment: He had two large holes in his heart.

Upon arriving at his new home in Indiana in the United States, he had to be taken to a hospital that boasted one of the world's best pediatric heart surgeons.

He was in intensive care for six days, and spent 30 more days in the hospital to fully recuperate. His new parents, Robert and Cindy Palmer, kept a bedside watch.

Now 4 years old, Noah is a healthy child who attends preschool and loves to play with his friends.

His story, as recounted by his adoptive father, is among the true-to-life accounts published in a primer distributed during yesterday's launch of the 9th Global Consultation on Child

ABANDONED/ A15

US war on Iraq largely about oil—Greenspan

WASHINGTON—FORMER FEDERAL Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan, for years an inscrutable seer on the economy, is causing a stir by alleging in his new memoir that "the Iraq war is largely about oil."

Greenspan, who as head of the US central bank was famous for his tight-lipped reserve, is uncharacteristically direct, also accusing President George W. Bush of abandoning Republican principles on the economy. *(See related story on Page B5.)*

"I'm saddened that it is politically inconvenient to acknowledge what everyone knows—the Iraq war is largely about oil," he wrote in reported excerpts of "The Age of Turbulence: Adventures in a New World," which is set for release on Monday.

In an interview with The Washington Post, however, Greenspan clarified that while securing global oil supplies was "not the administration's motive," it had presented the White House with a case for why removing Saddam Hussein was important for the global economy.

"I was not saying that that's the administration's motive," he said in the interview. "I'm just saying that if some-

US WAR/ A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon and the whole Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

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Second FrontPage

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EZ2

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FOUR DIGIT

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(In exact order)

Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening

3 1 2 | 0 3 2

MEGALOTTO 6/45

2 16 19 25 35 43

₱4,780,632.60

OWS? 'DI BA KATATAAS LANG?

Strong peso seen lowering power rates

Napocor charges could go down 25 centavos for 14 months in Luzon

By Abigail L. Ho

THE STRENGTHENING PESO COULD RESULT in the reduction of National Power Corp. (Napocor) rates by about 25 centavos per kilowatt-hour in Luzon, and seven and six centavos in the Visayas and Mindanao, respectively.

How this reduction will eventually be reflected in household electricity bills would still depend on computations to be made by Napocor customers—distributors like Meralco and provincial electric companies and cooperatives.

Napocor's wholesale power rate reduction became possible after the Energy Regulatory Commission gave it provisional authority to reflect fluctuations related to purchased power payments and foreign exchange covering February to June 2006.

ERC chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said the provisional authority, which was approved last week and was now being routed for signature, would result in a 25-centavo/kWh reduction in Luzon for a period pegged at 14 months.

For Napocor's customers in the Visayas, a seven-centavo reduction is pegged for a period of seven months. In Mindanao, a six-centavo reduction period was placed at two months, he said.

"This is the effect of the strengthening of the peso against the dollar, and also of the amendment of the (implementing rules and regulations of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act) by the (Department of Energy and the Joint Congressional Power Commission), which enables us to feel the effect of the strengthening of the peso against the dollar," he told reporters.

Many times, generation and foreign exchange-related adjustments resulted in higher rates. The last few adjustments, however, showed deferred accounting adjustments that were lower than actual, thus resulting in rate reductions.

Albano said Napocor's power rates could go down even further in the coming months, mostly likely by as much as 70-80 centavos per kWh.

The provisional authority, he said, should take effect as soon as the ERC finishes signing the order. Napocor customers should feel its impact by the October-November billing cycle.

The ERC's recently approved provisional authority were for Napocor's eighth generation rate adjustment mechanism (Gram) and seventh incremental currency exchange rate adjustment (Icera) filings.

The quarterly Gram allows Napocor to recover cost fluctuations related to its purchased power from its independent power producers as well as fuel costs.

The Icera, on the other hand, is a quarterly rate adjustment mechanism that allows Napocor to reflect foreign exchange fluctuations in the rates it charges its customers.

Rate increases or decreases brought about by the approval of Napocor's Gram and Icera applications are revenue-neutral, meaning, the state firm will not profit from the rate adjustments.

"These costs are actual historical costs," Napocor earlier explained. "We are recovering them through the Gram and Icera incrementally and, as such, may either be an increase or a decrease in these adjustments. In the case of the last Gram and Icera approved by the ERC, which covered the period November 2005 to January 2006, the adjustment was also a decrease."

Earlier this year, the state firm had also denied allegations that it was deliberately delaying the filing of its Gram and Icera.

House passes bill postponing barangay elections

By Norman Bordadora

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTAtives last night approved on third reading House Bill No. 2417 seeking the postponement of the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections, moving the date from Oct. 29 this year to May 11, 2009.

With 149 voting for, 50 against and 4 abstentions, the House passed the one-line bill putting off the elections—the first piece of legislation to be approved by the chamber in the 14th Congress.

Makati City Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr., chair of the committee on suffrage and electoral reforms, said the postponement of the [barangay] elections will not "stifle grass roots democracy."

"Postponing polls always sounds bad," Locsin said in his sponsorship speech weeks ago.

"But nothing is lost in this case and a lot can be gained if we use the intervening period for essential reforms in the barangay and SK structures and to prepare for automation," he said.

Many members of the House, however, said they sought the postponement because they no longer had funds to support barangay council candidates after the recently concluded midterm polls in May.

"Believe me, there is no more [money] to collect," said Agusan del Norte Rep. Edelmiro Amante in vote.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño summed it up for those who voted against postponement.

"They said we can't afford to spend more money this year. We'd still be spending money when we hold the elections in 2008 or in 2009," Casiño said.

"They said the election is too near the [recently concluded] 2007 elections. [I say the] elections in 2009 is too near the 2010 elections," he said.

This developed as one of the bill's authors, Cebu Rep. Eduardo Gullas, welcomed what he saw as the Senate's readiness to support the House bill.

Gullas was referring to Senate President Manuel Villar's statement that he intended to seek and build a Senate consensus with respect to the House initiative postponing the Oct. 29 polls to the second Monday of May 2009.

Villar had also said the senators would have to give due course to the House bill, once it is referred to the Senate, since House members are in the best position to convey the true sentiments of their constituents.

"Our sense is, the Senate President's remark is indicative of the Senate's preparedness to consider the bill post-haste. The Senate President could have rejected the bill outright, but he did not," Gullas said.

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September 17 – 22, 2007 CFIP Goes Glocal... Together, We Are Stronger.

Program Highlights:

National Symposia on Understanding and Selling to Local Markets
Joya Room, The Heritage Hotel
EDSA cor. Roxas Blvd., Pasay City
September 19, 2007
Wednesday 8:00am – 5:00pm

- Current Trends in Housing & Condominium Development
  Mr. Roy D. Calleja, President
  Subdivision and Housing Developers Association, Inc. (SHDA)
- Furniture and Architectural Design for Excellence
  Arch. Ana S. Mangalino-Ling, FUAP, National Executive Vice President
  United Architects of the Philippines (UAP)
- International Trends in Design of Housing and Furniture
  Ms. Ivy Almario, President and Design Director
  Atelier Almario
- Glocalization: Genuine Imitation
  Mr. Marcelo L. Alonzo, Executive Director
  Philippine Institute of Interior Design (PIID)
- A Glocal Approach in Interior Design
  Mr. Leo Almeria, Design Director
  Leo Almeria Design Studio
- Local Furniture Retail Market
  Mr. Samie Lim, President
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Contact: jtorres@cfip.org.ph; griosa@cfip.org.ph

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MESSAGE

Warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines, Inc. as you spearhead the celebration of the Furniture and Furnishing Week.

Philippine furniture are recognized the world over not just for their creativity and artistry, but also for their consistent quality which are ensured by our local manufacturers.

Although the furniture industry has made tremendous improvements during the past few years, we know that more work needs to be done for our products to become more competitive in the global market. And this year's Furniture and Furnishing Week, with the theme, "CFIP Goes Glocal.. Together We Are Stronger," will set new tracks and directions to do precisely that.

More power to all of you and Mabuhay!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

MANILA
17 September 2007

Department of Trade & Industry

MESSAGE

Our warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines, Inc. as you celebrate Furniture & Furnishings Week on 17-22 September 2007 under the theme "CFIP Goes Glocal... Together We Are Stronger"

During the recent Consultation Workshop for the Philippine Export Development Plan 2008-2010, the concept of "coopetition" was highlighted as one of the strategic thrust for Philippine exports and I believe that this is particularly important for the furniture industry.

As competition for market position has been increasing in the New Economy, Philippine players must constantly use their imagination to create not just new products but also new strategies that will enable them to gain a bigger portion of the market, be it local or international. Coopetition therefore provides our players especially the SME's with a new playing field, a playing field full of, not adversaries, but opportunities for cooperation and market expansion. This is the spirit of coopetition and it is the new spirit of business. In fact, I believe that this will be the very same dynamic spirit that will carry not just the furniture industry but Philippine industries in general as we move forward into a new global order where there is a freer exchange of goods and services.

Therefore it is very timely that your Furniture & Furnishings Week celebration this year carries the theme "CFIP Goes Glocal... Together We Are Stronger" because this is exactly the kind of business attitude that the DTI wishes to nurture among Philippine businesses as we partner together to face the challenges of the 21st century

To CFIP, our sincerest congratulations and best wishes for success as you soar towards new and exciting avenues in the "glocal" horizon.

Mabuhay!

PETER B. FAVILA
Secretary

Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines, Inc.

MESSAGE

Let me extend my warmest greetings to all participants and sponsors of the 7th Furniture and Furnishings Week!

This year's theme of "CFIP Goes Glocal" appropriately addresses the need of the growing domestic consumer market for export-quality furniture and furnishings. I am encouraging all participants to take part in the one-day Symposia on Understanding and Selling to Local Markets wherein we can learn from the knowledge sharing of our resource speakers coming from the various fields of furniture and interior design, architecture, real estate development and local retail market. This is also an avenue to network with members and stakeholders of the different related industries directly affecting the Philippine furniture market. Let us take advantage of these opportunities to strengthen our business towards facing the challenges of the dynamic global environment.

Again, we thank you for your continued support of the Philippine furniture industry

Mabuhay!

Roxanne F. Aquino
President

OFW facing death penalty may be saved

THE FILIPINO DOMESTIC HELPER facing the death penalty in Kuwait for killing her female employer could get her sentence reduced after the Philippine Embassy was able to convince the victim's mother and two siblings to forgive her.

Vice President Noli de Castro, presidential adviser on overseas Filipino workers, relayed the news from Ambassador to Kuwait Ricardo Endaya.

De Castro said the embassy was now working to convince the victim's estranged husband as well as another sibling to forgive Marilou Ranario, a move which could reduce the death sentence meted out by a Kuwaiti court.

Ranario, from Bicol, admitted to killing her employer in January 2005 after the latter had repeatedly maligned Filipinos.

According to De Castro, the embassy has hired another lawyer to argue Ranario's case in the Kuwaiti Supreme Court which is scheduled to hear the appeal this week.

The Department of Foreign Affairs denied reports that Ranario had only 16 weeks to live, saying the verdict was still on appeal.

"It's not correct to say *na bibitayin na siya* (that she will be hanged). *Masyado namang* pessimistic *iyan* (That's too pessimistic)," said Foreign Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Esteban Conejos.

"The government is doing everything to save her. There's no hearing yet in Kuwait because of Ramadan," he said.

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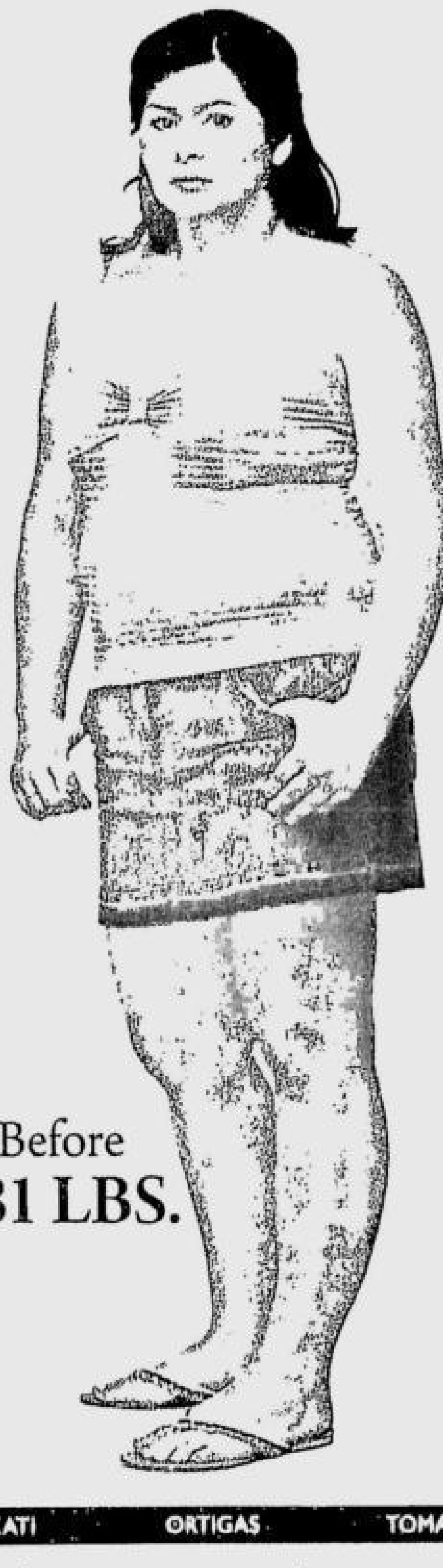

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- Aiko Melendez
Actress and Public Official

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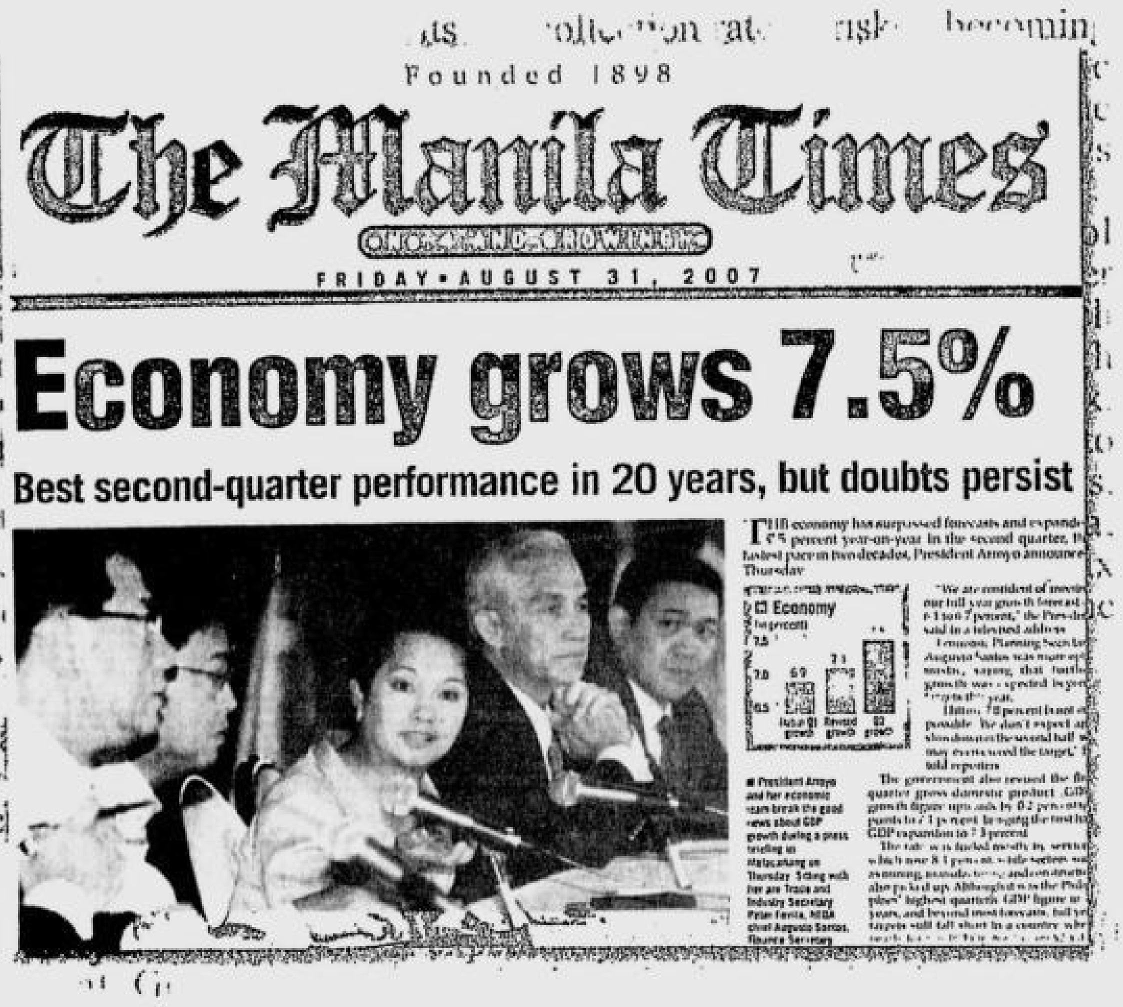
A4

GOOD NEWS



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The Manila Times

FRIDAY • AUGUST 31, 2007

Economy grows 7.5%

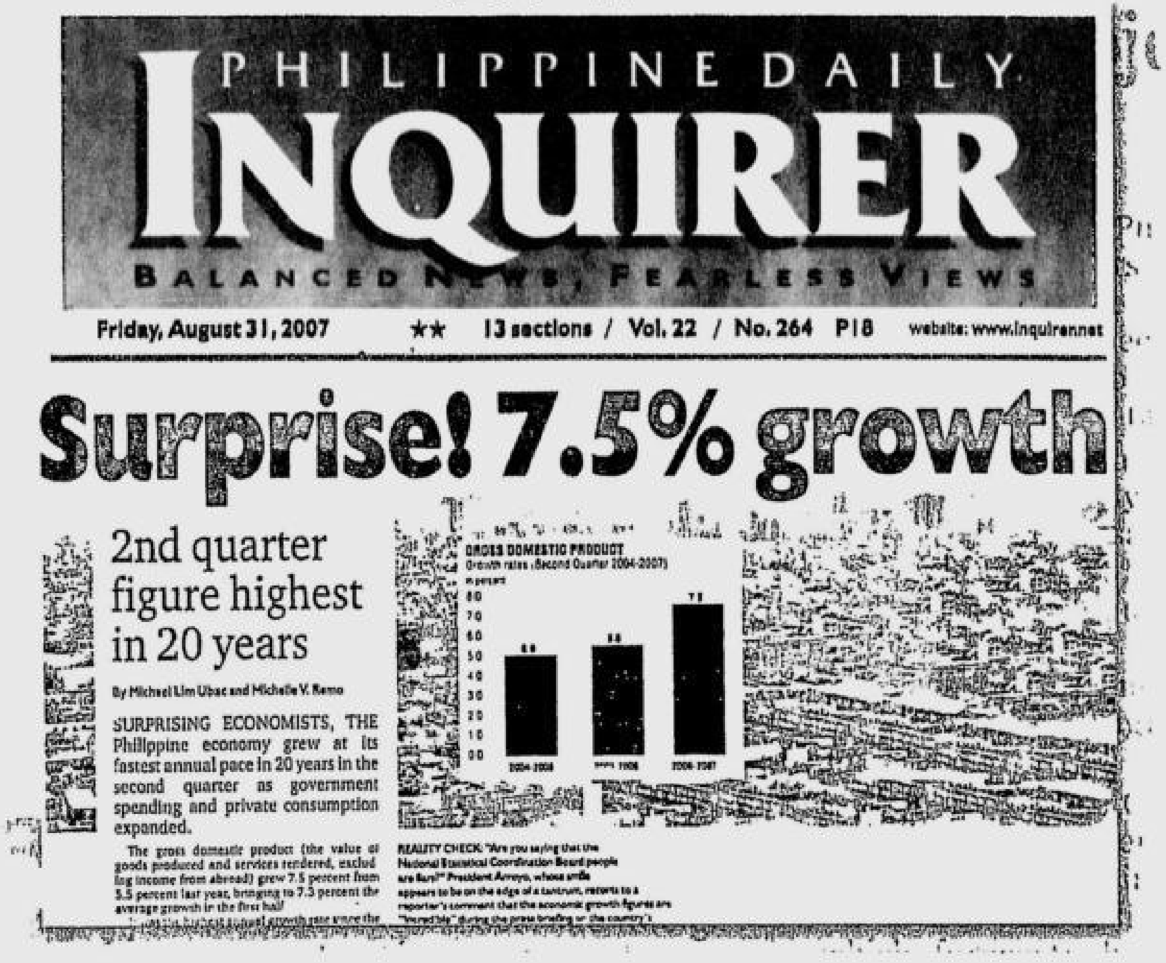
Best second-quarter performance in 20 years, but doubts persist

THE economy has surpassed forecasts and expanded 7.5 percent year-on-year in the second quarter, the fastest pace in two decades, President Arroyo announced Thursday.

Economy
(in percent)
7.5
7.0
6.5
6.9
7.1
7.5
Actual Q1 growth
Revised growth
Q2 growth

"We are confident of meeting our full year growth forecast of 6.1 to 6.7 percent," the President said in a televised address.

President Arroyo and her economic team break the good news about GDP growth during a press briefing in Malacañang on Thursday. Sitting with her are Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Favila, NEDA chief Augusto Santos, Finance Secretary



PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, August 31, 2007 ★★ 13 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 264 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Surprise! 7.5% growth

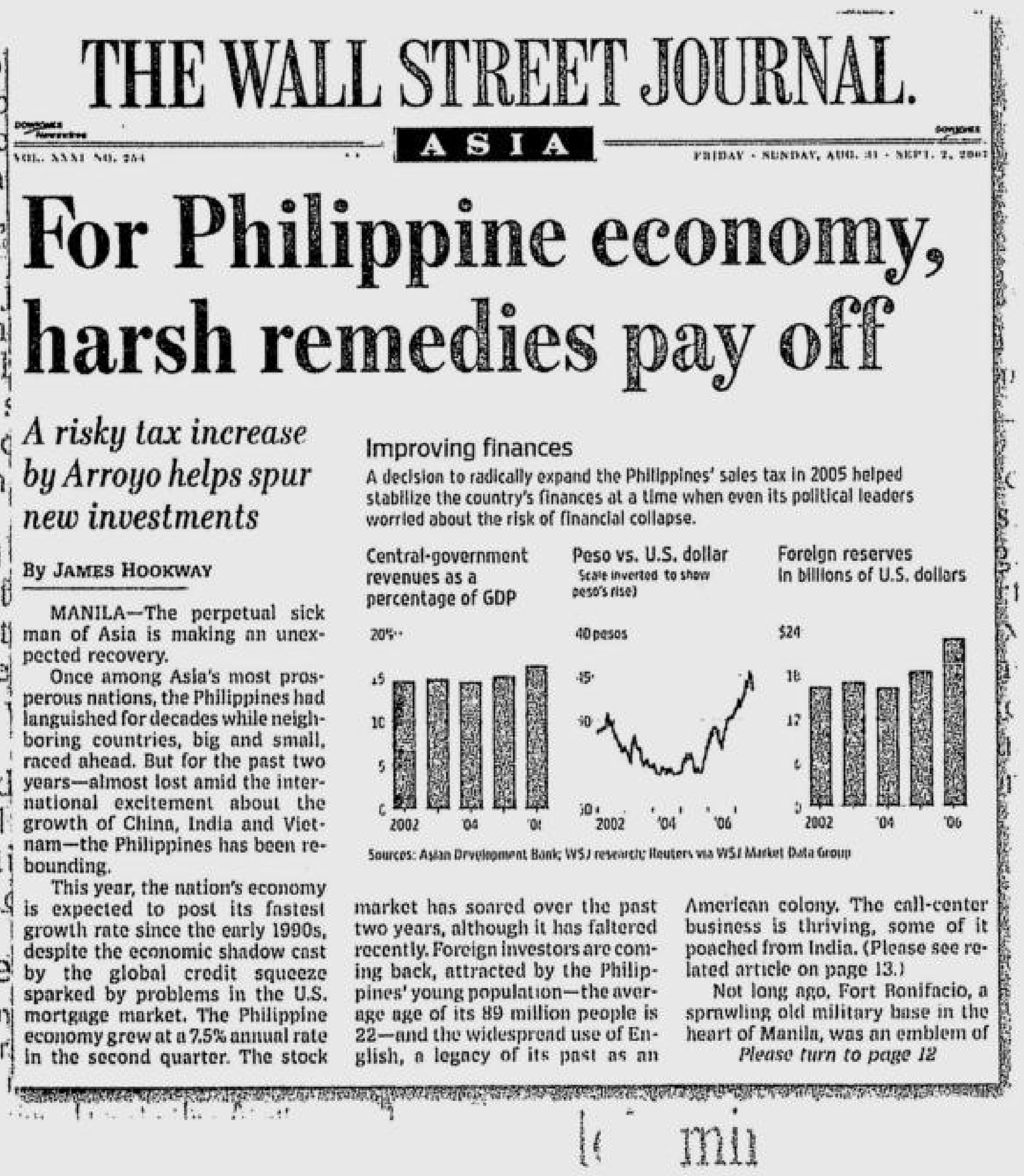
2nd quarter figure highest in 20 years

By Michael Lim Ubac and Michelle V. Remo

SURPRISING ECONOMISTS, THE Philippine economy grew at its fastest annual pace in 20 years in the second quarter as government spending and private consumption expanded.

The gross domestic product (the value of goods produced and services rendered, excluding income from abroad) grew 7.5 percent from 5.5 percent last year, bringing to 7.3 percent the average growth in the first half

REALITY CHECK: "Are you saying that the National Statistical Coordination Board people are liars?" President Arroyo, whose smile appears to be on the edge of a tantrum, retorts to a reporter's comment that the economic growth figures are "incredible" during the press briefing or the country's



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
ASIA

VOL. XXXI NO. 264 FRIDAY - SUNDAY, AUG. 31 - SEPT. 2, 2007

For Philippine economy, harsh remedies pay off

A risky tax increase by Arroyo helps spur new investments

By JAMES HOOKWAY

MANILA—The perpetual sick man of Asia is making an unexpected recovery.

Once among Asia's most prosperous nations, the Philippines had languished for decades while neighboring countries, big and small, raced ahead. But for the past two years—almost lost amid the international excitement about the growth of China, India and Vietnam—the Philippines has been rebounding.

This year, the nation's economy is expected to post its fastest growth rate since the early 1990s, despite the economic shadow cast by the global credit squeeze sparked by problems in the U.S. mortgage market. The Philippine economy grew at a 7.5% annual rate in the second quarter. The stock market has soared over the past two years, although it has faltered recently. Foreign investors are coming back, attracted by the Philippines' young population—the average age of its 89 million people is 22—and the widespread use of English, a legacy of its past as an American colony. The call-center business is thriving, some of it poached from India. (Please see related article on page 13.)

Not long ago, Fort Bonifacio, a sprawling old military base in the heart of Manila, was an emblem of

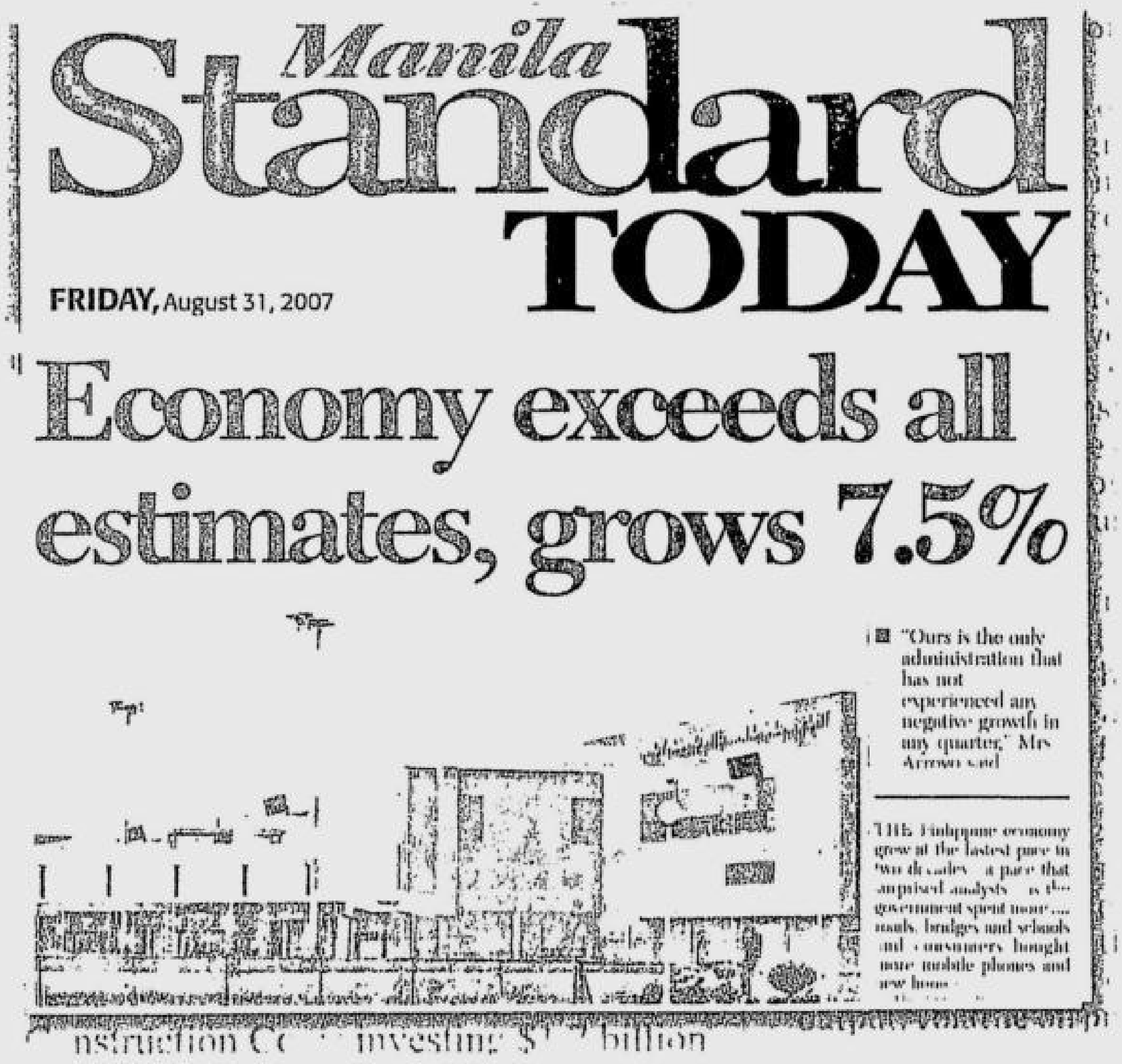
Please turn to page 12

Improving finances

A decision to radically expand the Philippines' sales tax in 2005 helped stabilize the country's finances at a time when even its political leaders worried about the risk of financial collapse.

Central-government revenues as a percentage of GDP
20%
15
10
5
0
2002
'04
'06
Peso vs. U.S. dollar
(Scale inverted to show peso's rise)
40 pesos
45
50
55
2002
'04
'06
Foreign reserves in billions of U.S. dollars
$24
18
12
6
0
2002
'04
'06

Sources: Asian Development Bank; WSJ research; Reuters via WSJ Market Data Group



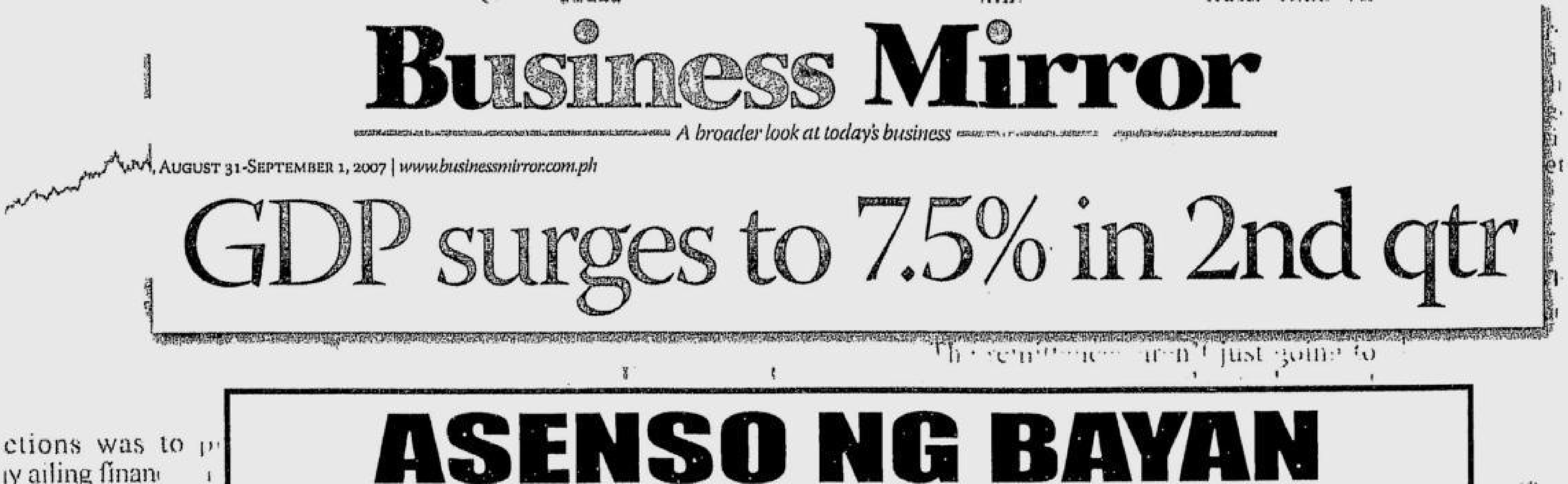
Manila
Standard TODAY

FRIDAY, August 31, 2007

Economy exceeds all estimates, grows 7.5%

"Ours is the only administration that has not experienced any negative growth in any quarter," Mrs. Arroyo said.

THE Philippine economy grew at the fastest pace in two decades, a pace that surprised analysts, as the government spent more on roads, bridges and schools and consumers bought more mobile phones and new homes



Business Mirror
A broader look at today's business

August 31-September 1, 2007 | *www.businessmirror.com.ph*

GDP surges to 7.5% in 2nd qtr

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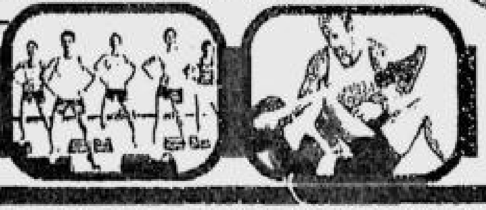

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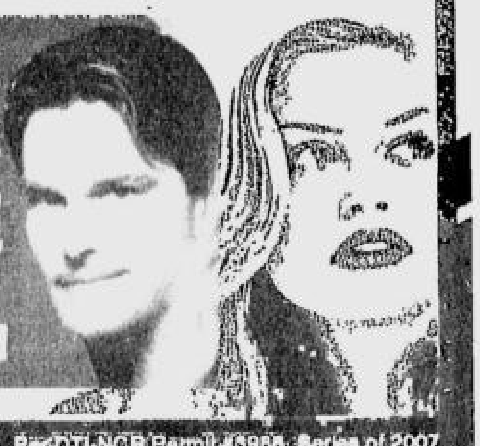

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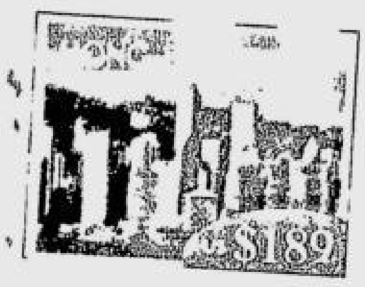
Swingaround

PAL SWINGAROUND 2007



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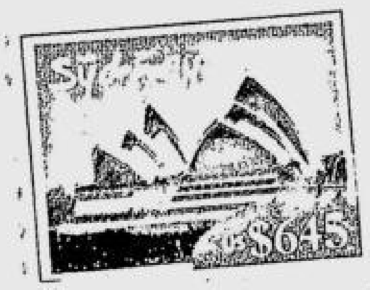

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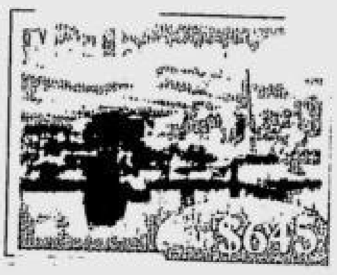

Bangkok
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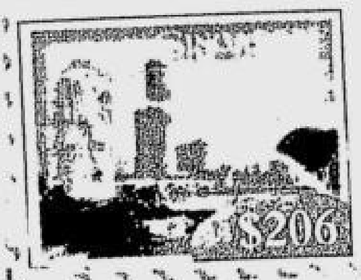

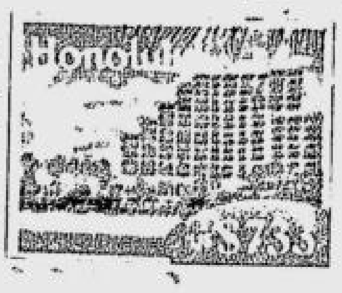

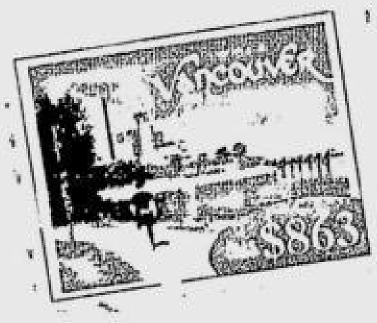

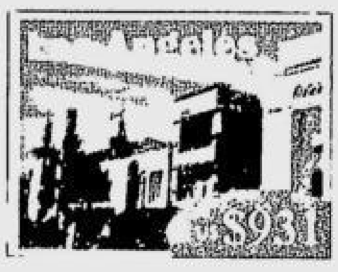

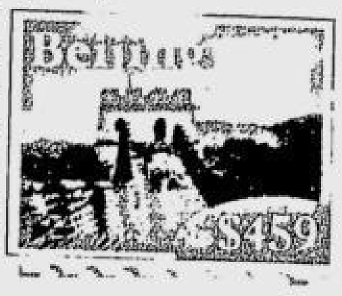

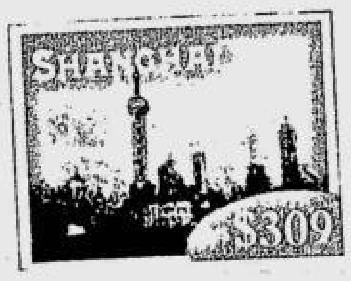

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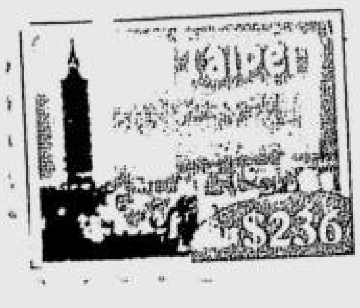

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BIR data bank to flush out …

From page A1.

The alternative will not be pretty for tax evaders, Suarez said yesterday.

Road show

As soon as the amnesty year ends, the BIR will have data, including on the schools a taxpayer's children attend to see if one's income matches his or her expenditures, the lawmaker said.

Suarez led the first provincial road show presentation of the tax amnesty law at the University of the Philippines-Baguio yesterday.

The law grants taxpayers immunity from suit for tax deficiencies incurred in or before 2005.

Taxpayers may pay an amnesty fee computed roughly at 5 percent of his or her annual net income.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner Nelson Aspe said taxpayers with pending cases would not be allowed to avail themselves of the amnesty.

Bend rules

Suarez, one of the law's authors, told BIR employees here they were being ordered "to bend the rules" so tax evaders "can remove all the skeletons in their closets."

He said the government must accept at face value the statements of assets and liabilities offered up by taxpayers who avail themselves of the amnesty.

The BIR may look into these assets if an informer provides data challenging the veracity of the list of assets submitted by the taxpayer during the amnesty period, Suarez said.

He said the amnesty law was part of the tax reforms, which President Macapagal-Arroyo had pursued after the BIR met its tax collection target "for the first time in Philippine history" in 2005.

Lateral attrition

The law is complemented by a lateral attrition law, which automatically ends the employment of tax officials who fail to meet collection targets.

Suarez, also one of the authors of the attrition law, said a former internal revenue commissioner resigned because of this law.

He has started crafting a measure that removes government tax agents from the coverage of the salary standardization law.

It's an incentive law because BIR salaries would be determined by the amount of taxes the agency collects, according to Suarez.

Before 2005, administrations dating back to the late President Manuel Roxas relied on foreign and domestic loans because the BIR could not collect enough taxes to finance 72 percent of the annual general appropriations act, Suarez said.

The BIR also failed to meet last year's target and is performing poorly now that 2007 is winding up, he said.

Suarez said the tax reforms under RA 9480 was originally presented for implementation during the administration of former President Joseph Estrada, but a Cabinet official, whom he did not name, said jailing a big tax evader would be enough disincentive for tax evasion.

"When I was told that, I replied to the Cabinet official: 'Who among us would go to jail first?' Hard as it is to admit, cheating the government is a way of life. But [it is a way of life] we cannot afford. We cannot let this country hemorrhage or else we will borrow again," Suarez said.

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It's not his body odor but your nose, says study

From page A1

gest a single gene may determine how people perceive body odor.

The study, published online on Sunday in the British journal Nature, helps explain why the same sweaty man can smell like vanilla to some, like urine to others, and for about a third of adults, have no smell at all.

It has long been known that smell and taste—which are essentially the same thing—are highly subjective. The fragrance that one person finds sublime could make someone else queasy, and one man's wine of the gods can be another man's plonk.

But the exact mechanism accounting for these differences has remained largely a mystery, though genes were known to play a role.

The US study fills in a piece of the puzzle.

"This is the first time that any human odorant receptor is associated with how we experience odors," Hiroaki Matsunami of Duke University in North Carolina said in a telephone interview.

Matsunami and colleagues at Duke and Rockefeller University in New York focused on the chemical androstenone, which is created when the body breaks down the male sex hormone testosterone.

A gene called OR7D4

Androstenone is in the sweat of men and women, but it is more highly concentrated in men. How one perceives its smell appears to have a lot to do with variations in one odor receptor gene called OR7D4.

"It is well known that people have different perceptions to androstenone. But people didn't know what was the basis of it," Matsunami said.

To find out, researchers in Matsunami's lab tested sweat chemicals on most of the 400 known odor receptors used by the nose to sniff out smells and chemicals.

They found the OR7D4 gene reacted strongly with the sex steroid androstenone. Next, they tested whether variations in this gene had an impact on how people perceived the smell of androstenone in male sweat.

In the mood for love

They took blood samples and sequenced the DNA of 400 people who participated in a smell perception test done in Leslie Vosshall's lab at Rockefeller.

What they found is slight genetic variations determine whether androstenone has a pungent smell, a sweet, vanilla-like smell or no smell at all.

The role of androstenone is not well understood in humans, but in pigs it sends a powerful sex signal that puts sows in the mood for love.

"It facilitates the courtship behavior in females," Matsunami said.

Further study

"There is some evidence published showing this chemical can modify the mood or hormone levels in humans," he said. "What we don't know is whether the receptor we found was in any way involved in this process."

He and colleagues will further study this aspect to understand how smelling these chemicals might affect human social and sexual behavior.

Reports from Reuters, AFP

The nation celebrates
The 11th National Urban Pest Control Week
4th Week of September, 2007 * Per Presidential Proclamation 990/s-97

MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

MESSAGE

Warmest greetings to the officers and members of the National Committee on Urban Pest Control (NCUPC) as you observe the *11th National Urban Pest Control Week* with the theme, *"Food Safety is First in Preventing Foodborne Diseases."*

This weeklong event, along with the holding of the *2nd Food Industry Sanitation and Urban Pest Management: A National Conference,"* focuses on good manufacturing practices (GMPs) and hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP) aimed at promoting safe, wholesome and quality foods.

As the conference gathers food manufacturers, processors, sanitation and safety officers, hotel and restaurant owners and managers, government officials and other professionals from all over the country, I expect this occasion to promote the best practices in food safety and quality control in the country to ensure a better and healthier life for our people.

Our national agenda is designed to move our country toward economic prosperity and national development. As active partners of government, I ask you to join me in our efforts to achieve a 7- to 8- percent growth rate in the next three years.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

MANILA
17-23 September 2007

TEN-POINT AGENDA TO "BEAT THE ODDS" IN
SIX YEARS UNDER THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION
"BEAT THE ODDS - this will be our battle cry and agenda for the next six years"
--President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

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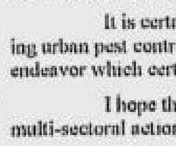
E - Education for all
A - Automated elections
T - Transport and digital infrastructure to connect the country
T - Terminate the MILF and NPA conflicts
H - Heal the wounds of EDSA
E - Electricity and water for all barangays
O - Opportunities for 10 million jobs
D - Decongest Metro Manila
DS - Develop Clark and Subic



Republic of the Philippines
Office of the Vice President

MESSAGE

I am delighted to greet you on the celebration of the 11th National Urban Pest Control Week on September 17-23, 2007 under the theme *"Food Safety is First in Preventing Foodborne Diseases."* Our various government agencies have constantly endorsed the National Committee on Urban Pest Control (NCUPC) advocacy and promotional activities for physical, chemical and microbial-free establishments and environment.

This year's activities will be highlighted by a national conference themed, *"2nd Food Industry Sanitation and Urban Pest Management,"* that focuses on food Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).

It is certainly pleasing and laudable that NCUPC maintains the vigor in advocating urban pest control so that the public may enjoy safe, wholesome and quality food - an endeavor which certainly deserves our full support.

I hope that NCUPC will continue improving food industry sanitation through multi-sectoral action.

MABUHAY!

NOLI "KABAYAN" DE CASTRO

Manila, 3 August 2007

PROGRAMME
"2nd FOOD INDUSTRY SANITATION AND URBAN PEST MANAGEMENT: A NATIONAL CONFERENCE"
THEME: "Food Safety Is First in Preventing Foodborne Diseases"

PROGRAM CONTENTS FOR CONFERENCE PROPER
(September 20, 2007, 8:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.)
On-Site Registration of Participants 8:00 - 9:00
PART 1 (Opening Ceremonies)
Invocation
MRS. NANCY RUSSELL CATAN
Vice President For Administration & Finance, MAPECON Philippines, Inc.
Philippine National Anthem
Opening Remarks
DR. METODIO A. PALAYPAY
Executive Director, National Committee on Urban Pest Control (NCUPC)
Welcome Remarks
MR. VICTOR A. ARBAS
President Franchise Urban Pest Control Association of the Philippines (FUPCAP)
Introduction of the Keynote Speaker
DR. METODIO A. PALAYPAY
Executive Director National Committee on Urban Pest Control (NCUPC)
Keynote Addresses
HON JOSE L. ATIENZA, JR.
Secretary, Department of Environment & Natural Resources (DENR)
HON. LEONILA V. CHAVEZ
Committee Chairwoman, Committee on Food Security, House of Representatives
Coffee Break 10:00 - 10:15
PART 2 (Conference Proper) 10:15 - 4:00
Latest Trends: Best Practices in Food Safety & Quality System in the Food Industry 10:15 - 10:45
Speaker ENGR. CLOYD JONES D. UNSON
Project Systems Lead Consultant, ACTII Internationale Corporation
The Role of the Department of Health in Ensuring Safe, Wholesome & Quality Food Products 10:45 - 11:15
Speaker HON. CATALINA C. SANCHEZ
Chairman, Board of Pharmacy, Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)/
President Philippine Chamber of Health Inc., Department of Health (DOH)
The Importance of Implementing GMPs Particularly Facility Premise 11:15 - 11:45
Speaker ENGR.RANULFO C. FELICIANO, FPSSE
President, Philippine Society of Sanitary Engineers (PSSE)/ASEAN Engr./APEC Engr.
Open Forum 11:45 - 12:00
Lunch Break 12:00 - 1:00
Compliance of the Food Industry on GMPs and Other Food Safety Standards 1:00 - 1:30
Speaker HON. LETICIA BARBARA B. GUTIERREZ, MS
Director, Bureau of Food & Drugs, Department of Health (DOH)
The Importance of Preparation of Safe, Wholesome And Quality Food Products 1:30 - 2:00
Speaker HON. EMELDA C. PERALTA
Chairman, Board of Nutrition & Dietetics, Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)
Effective Pest Management Program & Safe Use of Various Urban Pest Control And Enviro-relatedProducts & Technologies/ Updates: Citizen Anti-Dengue (CAD)/ Gov't Anti Dengue (GAD) Tasks 2:00 - 2:30
Speaker HON. GONZALO O. CATAN, JR.
Vice Chairman, Board of Agriculture, Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)/
Technical Director, National Committee on Urban Pest Control (NCUPC)
Coffee/Short Break 2:30 - 2:45
Workshop: Developing An Implementable/Doable HACCP Program Based On The 7 Principles Of HACCP For The Food Industry As A Food Safety & Quality Management System 2:45 - 5:15
Speaker-Facilitator: DR. SONIA Y. DE LEON
President, Foundation For The Advancement Of Food Sciences & Technology (FAFST)
2:45 Steps Of GMP/HACCP
3:45 Workshop (To Be Assisted By Assistant Facilitators)
4:30 Presentation of Group Outputs
5:00 Closing of Workshop
Part 3 (Closing Ceremonies)
Closing Remarks/Oath Taking as Members of the NCUPC
DR. METODIO A. PALAYPAY
Executive Director
National Committee on Urban Pest Control (NCUPC)
Presentation of Participants & Distributions of Certificates of Participation/ Appearance
DR. METODIO A. PALAYPAY
HON. GONZALO O. CATAN, JR.
Closing Prayer
MRS. RUTH MARIE C. ATIENZA
Souvenir Photo-Taking
MR. BARBIE L. ATIENZA
Vice President for External Affairs, Manila Bulletin
MASTER OF CEREMONIES

11th NATIONAL URBAN PEST CONTROL WEEK CONFERENCE * 2/F Quezon Hall, Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) Building * Pres. E. Quirino Avenue corner Pres. E. Quirino Extension, Plaza Dilao, Paco Manila * September 20, 2007 (Thursday 8:00 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.) * For Inquiries & Reservation call the NCUPC Secretariat * Telefax No. (02) 484-0208

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Estradas unfazed by Chavit threat against JV

By Kristine L. Alave

THE ESTRADA FAMILY YESTERDAY BElittled the threat made by former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson to implicate San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito, a son of Joseph Estrada, in his father's activities if the former president appeals his plunder case in the Supreme Court.

Members of the family, particularly JV, said they were unfazed by Singson's threat.

Singson said JV was only after media attention.

The Sandiganbayan Special Division had ordered the forfeiture of several of Estrada's assets, and sentenced him to up to 40 years in prison. The former president remains at his estate in Tanay, Rizal, where he is under house arrest.

JV, Estrada's son with ex actress Guia Gomez, said an appeal would push through despite Singson's pronouncement.

"*Walang Pilipino na nasa katinuan ang pagiisip ang patuloy pang maniniwala kay* Chavit (No Filipino in his right mind would still believe Chavit)," he said.

Government's star witness

Singson, the government's star witness in the jueteng charges against the former president, according to JV, was one of the depositors in the Jose Velarde account.

In turn, Singson accused JV of depositing over P100 million to the account.

While he did not directly answer Singson's charge, JV said people should stop paying attention to the ex governor.

"*Darating din ang tamang panahon na mapapatunayan na walang kasalanan sa sambayanan si* PJEE *at ang aming pamilya* (Time will come when it will be proved that PJEE [President Joseph Ejercito Estrada] and our family committed no crime against the country)," he said.

Estrada's wife, former Sen. Ma. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, said the family couldn't care less if Singson filed new plunder charges against other family members.

"He can file a new case if he wants to. He should have done that in the beginning," an angry Loi said.

Unfairly tried

Both JV and Loi maintained Estrada's innocence, stressing that the family patriarch and opposition leader was unfairly tried and that the verdict was issued to bolster President Macapagal- Arroyo's presidency.

Singson had implicated Sen. Jinggoy Ejercito, Estrada's elder son with Loi, for accepting bribes from jueteng funds.

The Sandiganbayan Special Division cleared Jinggoy of plunder, along with lawyer Edward Serapio.

Estrada's lawyers announced on Saturday that they would file a motion of reconsideration with the Sandiganbayan on or before Sept. 27.

If the antigraft court upholds its decision, the Estrada camp can file an appeal for review of the case in the Supreme Court.

Atong Ang back in business?

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Has Charlie "Atong" Ang, former gambling buddy of deposed President Joseph Estrada, found a way to return to his former "business?"

While Estrada has been convicted of plunder for receiving "jueteng" kickbacks, Ang has supposedly set up Lucky Titanium Corp. to run the small town lottery (STL) in Cavite.

A certain Alex Billan was the signatory to the application that the company filed with the provincial council.

Managed by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), the STL is a government-approved project primarily aimed at eradicating the illegal numbers game.

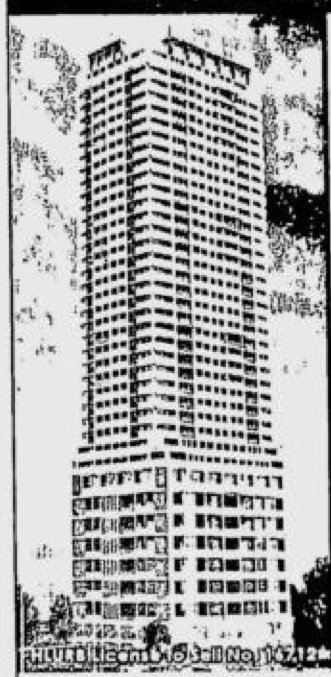
Antigambling advocates have blamed the STL for the resurgence of jueteng in some areas where it had been purportedly stopped by police.

A casino patron, Ang was one of Estrada's coaccused in the P4-billion plunder case filed against the ousted president in the Sandiganbayan.

Three months before Estrada's conviction, Ang was placed on probation by the antigraft court after he pleaded guilty to a lesser charge in the plunder case.

Another official confirmed that Ang indeed owned the company that bagged the STL franchise.

"The moment it was passed in the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (provincial council), we knew it (the application) came from Ang's company because we were told by a government official close to him," the second source said. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*



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Abalos cites Comelec concerns for absence

By Beverly T. Natividad and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS CHAIR BENjamin Abalos yesterday said he could not attend the Senate hearing on the National Broadband Network (NBN) deal because he did not want to compromise the Comelec.

"I wish I could, but my personal concern should not outweigh the concerns of the office. I have a duty to protect and uphold the Comelec's independence. I will sacrifice my personal concern," said Abalos.

He said that contrary to reports that he was "snubbing" the hearing, he, in fact, wanted to attend it to clear his name. "I want to attend. I know I can better explain myself if I go there," he said.

Abalos said he had not received an invitation or subpoena to attend the Senate inquiry.

He said he was still studying whether to attend the hearings if invited.

Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza has begged off from attending today's hearing.

Mendoza signed the NBN contract on April 21 in Boao, China, along with ZTE vice president Yu Yong in ceremonies witnessed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a letter to the blue ribbon committee on Sept. 12, Mendoza said the two pending cases in the Supreme Court seeking to block the ZTE deal "prevents me and my corespondents to speak out on the matter due to certain legal constraints particularly under the recognized principle of sub judice."

The cases were filed by Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico and Amsterdam Holdings Inc., the original proponent of the NBN project.

Aside from Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, only Suplico and columnist Jarius Bondoc have confirmed their attendance in today's hearing.

Among those also invited are Yo Yung, Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Communications Assistant Secretary Lorenzo Formoso III; former Director General Romulo Neri of the National Economic and Development Authority, and former Chair Ramon Sales of the Commission on Information and Communication Technology.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he would press De Venecia on his motive in exposing the alleged payoffs in the contract.

"Assuming that the deal is rescinded, I would ask him if he would still pursue the broadband contract," Lacson said.

Sen. Joker Arroyo was not too hot on today's hearing as he dismissed the issue as a dispute between "commissioners."

"They want the Senate to be the referee in their fight. But we should not be allowed to be used as their collecting agency," he said.

With the unraveling of the ZTE contract, Sen. Jamby Madrigal said it was about time the Senate review all 47 agreements forged by Ms Arroyo with the Chinese government since she took power in 2001.

GMA urges Senate to act . . .

From page A1

stores in the barangays that will sell cheaper medicine and the allotment of P370 million for the acquisition of medicine in next year's national budget.

"We will push Congress to approve the bill for cheaper medicine so that the price of medicine would go down further for the benefit of the public," she said at the 146-bed, P448-million Zamboanga del Norte Medical Center, which she inaugurated here.

Contentious issues

The President last year certified as urgent the proposed Cheaper Medicines Act. She said that the Senate and the House had passed their versions of the bill but the bicameral conference committee had not been able to work on it.

"I think there were some bones of contention from the last time. There was one addition in the period of amendments of price control. Maybe we should remove those controversial provisions so that it will be the minimum that everyone agrees on," she said.

The President said her No. 1 agenda during her visit to India was "to spread the availability of half-priced medicine to our local governments and also to our private sector."

Air pacts, investments

She said she would also work out air agreements for Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific, Air Philippines and Asian Spirit "so they could take advantage of the air rights that India is giving us."

The President said she intended to seek more Indian investments for the country, as well as look into India's pioneering technology on planting jatropha, a substitute for diesel which the government is now promoting.

Earlier, Ms Arroyo was in Zamboanga del Sur where she opened the Agro-Tourism and Heritage Complex in Pagadian City.

US war on Iraq tied to oil

From page A1

body asked me, 'Are we fortunate in taking out Saddam?' I would say it was essential."

Greenspan's bombshell memoir appears 18 months after he left the Fed following a career that spanned 1987 to 2006, with the US economy at a crossroads, and ahead of a critical Fed meeting under the chairmanship of his successor, Ben Bernanke.

'The Oracle'

The man dubbed "The Oracle" tells his own tale of nearly two decades at the helm of one of the world's most powerful financial institutions, and includes surprising swipes at the Bush administration.

US Defense Secretary Robert Gates, while explaining his "respect" for Greenspan, rejected the charge that a thirst for crude explained the decision to invade Iraq in March 2003.

"I know the same allegation was made about the Gulf War in 1991, and I just don't believe it's true," Gates said on ABC television on Sunday.

"I think that it's really about stability in the Gulf. It's about rogue regimes trying to develop weapons of mass destruction," he said. "It's about aggressive dictators."

200 protesters arrested

Gates' defense came a day after thousands of antiwar protesters marched in Washington.

A spokesperson for one of the groups which organized the march said more than 200 protesters were taken into custody, including at least 10 Iraq war veterans, when they attempted to cross a police barrier near the US Capitol.

Members of the US Congress, who by a broad majority also voted to authorize the use of military force against Iraq, also dismissed Greenspan's assertion.

"I don't believe that 77 United States senators on a broad, bipartisan basis would have authorized the use of force ... if it was only about oil," Republican Sen. John Cornyn told CNN.

Principle for power

Greenspan, a lifelong Republican, writes in his book that he advised the White House to veto some bills to curb "out-of-control" spending while the Republicans controlled Congress.

According to The Wall Street Journal, he says that Bush's failure to do so "was a major mistake."

Republicans in Congress, he writes, "swapped principle for power. They ended up with neither."

"They deserved to lose" in the 2006 elections when the Democrats retook control of Congress, he adds.

$100,000 per speech

A speech by the 81-year-old Greenspan is said to command more than $100,000, and Greenspan reportedly earned an $8.5-million advance from Penguin Press for the book.

In the memoir, he puts his own spin on the events surrounding the 1987 stock market crash, the bursting of the Internet bubble and the 2001 recession coinciding with the Sept. 11 terror strikes.

In a blog on the online bookstore Amazon.com, Greenspan says he will share details of his childhood in New York, his years as a jazz musician and his friendship with US presidents.

"After years of talking Fedspeak in carefully calibrated congressional testimony, I could finally use my own voice," Greenspan says with uncharacteristic verve.

"I tackled the personal part first, but then started unraveling the detective story about the economy," Greenspan adds in his blog. "What did all the economic shifts we began to detect in the late '90s mean?"

Blamed for crisis

His memoirs are due out just as the institution he led for so many years holds its most anticipated meeting in years.

On Tuesday, investors around the world will be closely watching the Fed for some sign that might help counter the effects of a US mortgage crisis that has rattled markets and led to a credit squeeze. *(See related story in Business, Page B5.)*

Greenspan is increasingly being blamed by some for the crisis. By keeping interest rates so low for so long, some argue, he helped foster the real estate bubble behind much of the current woes.

The former Fed chief told the Financial Times that the drop in property prices "is going to be larger than most people expect."

He added that he would not be surprised if the percentage decline in the United States ended up being "in double digits." *AFP*

Mike A flies to Hong Kong

From page A1

called by Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. to pressure him to back out of the project.

"I have not experienced something like this before, but I will say the truth under oath," he told the INQUIRER when asked if he would name the mystery man.

De Venecia, 44, has confirmed his attendance at the Senate blue ribbon's investigation at 9:30 this morning.

Besides the Senate, the House of Representatives is investigating the ZTE deal, which congressional leaders want scrapped because it is allegedly overpriced and attended by corruption. Others claim that the project is unnecessary.

Cayetano committee

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, chair of the blue ribbon committee, said he would ask De Venecia about the mystery man's identity.

"It is important that we know the identity of this mystery man and other details involved in crafting the ZTE deal because we want to unmask how this administration does its business," Cayetano said.

The NBN project aims to build a nationwide hi-tech telecommunications backbone that would link the telephone, cellular and Internet services of all government offices.

De Venecia, a son of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., said he was ready to confront the other officials he linked to corruption and bribery in connection with the project.

He earlier said the influential person pointed his fingers at him and told him: "*Umatras ka* (Back off)" at a meeting in March at Abalos' office at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City.

De Venecia said he found the man's presence improper but acknowledged that he did not know if the man was among those who had received kickbacks from the project.

Leather jacket

In a leather jacket and black pants, the President's husband passed through the Dignitaries Lounge at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 1, taking an elevator from the Presidential Lounge.

Mike Arroyo was driven to the airport through the limited-access ramp area, bypassing regular traffic and skipping the long check-in queue at the terminal.

Indicating how Arroyo wanted his departure to be kept from the public, airport security officials prevented the INQUIRER from getting close to him when he emerged from the elevator.

As he walked to the boarding gate, Arroyo was flanked by executives of the Manila International Airport Authority, including General Manager Alfonso Cusi and airport security chief retired Gen. Angel Atutubo, an official known to be close to the first family.

Walking closely behind was National Bureau of Investigation official Pedro Bulaong and chief airport customs collector Ding So.

De Venecia said that contrary to speculation, the mystery man was not Diosdado "Buboy" Macapagal Jr., a brother of Ms Arroyo.

He said he knew Buboy Macapagal to be a "very honest, very professional businessman."

Asked if the mystery man was another person close to the President, De Venecia said: "Can I answer that tomorrow?"

He has accused Abalos of trying to bribe him with $10 million to have AHI withdraw its own NBN proposal. He said Abalos called him to several meetings at Wack Wack and invited him to meet ZTE officials in Shenzen.

De Venecia said he rejected Abalos' alleged bribe offer and appeals to withdraw because he was convinced AHI had a better proposal that would not cost the government anything to build the NBN project.

Abalos has strongly denied De Venecia's allegation that he had offered the AHI founder a bribe.

De Venecia said Abalos had also taped his telephone conversations with ZTE officials. It was Abalos himself him about the wiretapping in anger, according to De Venecia.

The meeting in March, wh mystery man surfaced, was arra Communications Secretary Mendoza to reconcile him with

De Venecia said he was prepar face-off with Abalos or Mendoza

"Oh yes, I hope he (Abalos up," he said, saying he knew it his word against the Comelec ch

"I will tell him you tried to and thank God I did not take yo *(See story on this page.)*

Anguish

De Venecia revealed his ang the toll that his crusade against deal had taken on his relations his father.

The younger De Venecia is the Speaker from a previous (Victoria Perez).

He said his father told him waging a losing battle.

"You're not gonna win this. ing against the DOTC, which powerful agency, and Abalos head of a very powerful con And who are you? Even if you son," he quoted his father as tel

"He is very concerned about but also with the political aspec he will always try to protect the tration," he said.

But he said the Speaker did him from testifying in the Senat *report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

IN THE KNOW

JOSE MIGUEL "MIKE" ARROYO GOT embroiled in a controversy in 2005 when alleged "jueteng" bagmen claimed he had received kickbacks from the illegal numbers game.

The accusations came at a time when his wife was facing allegations of electoral fraud.

In June 2005, President Macapagal-Arroyo said her husband volunteered to go abroad. "He will leave to remove these distractions and volunteered to remove himself from any situation that will cast doubt on my presidency," she said.

The President's husband left for th United States on July 6, but returned the country on July 31 for the buria his half-sister.

Arroyo went back to the United States on Aug. 10 and stayed there late October.

In April this year, he was rushed to St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon for an emergency heart operation. H survived the dangerous open-hear surgery, and was advised by docto avoid stressful situations. ***Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research***

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ZTE says De Venecia III violating RP Constitution

By Daxim L. Lucas and Riza Olchondra

CHINA'S ZTE CORP. YESTERDAY SAID the son of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. would be violating the prohibition on relatives of high-ranking state officials from entering into government contracts had his firm cornered the $329-million contract for the National Broadband Network project.

Officials of ZTE admitted that the price of the contract ballooned by 33 percent from the initial quoted price, but insisted that this adjustment was made to accommodate the higher requirements of the government.

Speaking through an interpreter, Howard Xue, ZTE global marketing director and chief IT consultant, said the initial price for the contract was only $262 million, but this was later raised to $329 million.

"This was because of the upgrade of the network," Xue said. "The coverage [under the initial terms] before was 2,000 government offices, but this was raised to 25,000 [government offices]."

He said ZTE had to raise the capacity of its network "backbone" due to the higher communications capacity required by the government.

The escalation in price, Xue said, had nothing to do with any bribes or kickbacks as alleged by Jose de Venecia III who owns losing project proponent Amsterdam Holdings Inc (AHI).

The ZTE officials said they were upset that the criticism of the project had focused solely on them, while scant attention was given to AHI, which they claimed was incapable of undertaking a project of this scale.

At the same time, Xue pointed out that the younger De Venecia's interest in the project went against Philippine laws.

"He is the son of the Speaker of the House. This is against the Constitution," he said, explaining that the law prohibits relatives of the highest officials of the government up to the third degree of consanguinity from participating in government contracts.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, September 18, 2007
24th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Tim 3:1-13
Gospel: Luke 7:11-17

A little later Jesus went to a town called Naim and many of his disciples went with him—a great number of people. As he reached the gate of the town, a dead man was being carried out. He was the only son of his mother and she was a widow; there followed a large crowd of townspeople.

On seeing her, the Lord had pity on her and said, "Don't cry." Then he came up and touched the stretcher and the men who carried it stopped. Jesus then said, "Young man, awake, I tell you." And the dead man got up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. A holy fear came over them all and they praised God saying, "A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people." This news spread out in the Jewish country and the surrounding places.

Commentary

Do you want to be a bishop? You have to be married only once! You have to be irreproachable, a good teacher, not addicted to drink, a man of peace and you cannot love money. A bishop must manage his own household, because he will be managing the household of God. And deacons must follow in these same patterns—and all should be put on probation first! And the women who serve in these ministries must be trustworthy—the requirements are the same for all. We seem to have forgotten and have lost much of the wisdom of the early Church in regard to bishops/deacons for both men and women. Who in your Church would make worthy ministers?

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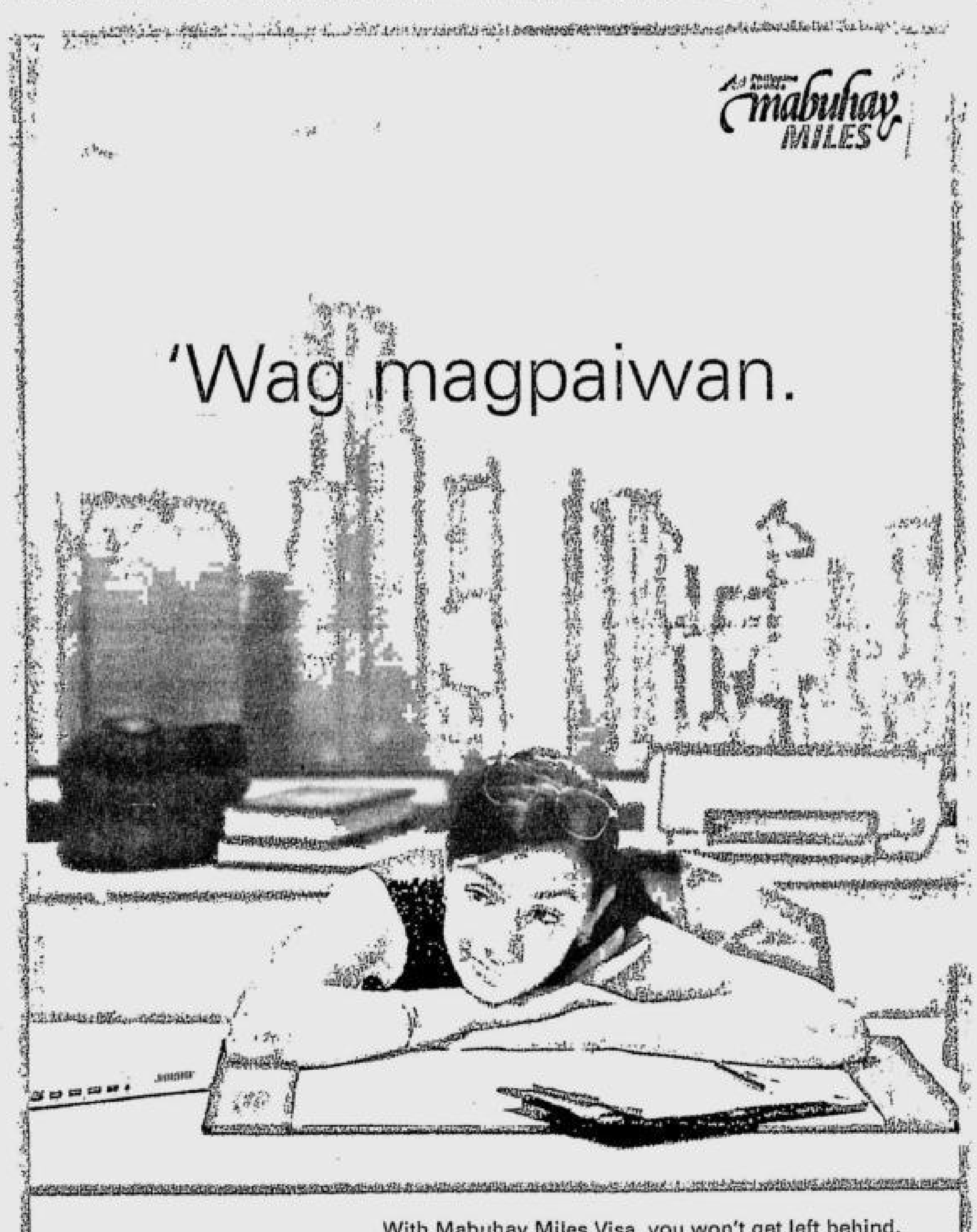

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Who's next?

EDITORIAL

AFTER THE SANDIGANBAYAN CONVICTED DEposed President Joseph Estrada of plunder last week, government officials, civil society leaders and media people began asking, "Who's next?" The Sandiganbayan decision has shown that no one is exempt from accountability, not even a former president, and it should embolden everyone to pursue graft and corruption cases against those who have to answer for them.

For her part, President Macapagal-Arroyo last Thursday created the Procurement Transparency Group that will monitor procurement for public projects and report irregularities to the agency heads concerned. She also formed a Pro-performance Infrastructure Monitoring Group.

But what is needed in dealing with the problem of graft and corruption are not new government agencies but resolute action against grafters. We already have many government agencies charged with bringing corrupt officials to justice. What is needed is the political will to go after these officials and not to let up until they are all behind bars.

For starters, Ms Arroyo and other officials should act on the following cases:

(1) The $2-million extortion charge against former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez filed by former Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez in 2001. Estrada had said then that Jimenez gave Perez $2 million to approve the $470-million contract to rehabilitate a power plant in Laguna won by the Argentine firm Industrias Metalurgicas Pescarmona Sociedad Anonima (Impsa). Graft prosecutors said there was sufficient evidence to establish that Perez and company had committed "illegal acts."

(2) The P1.3-billion election computerization deal. The Supreme Court on Jan. 13, 2004 voided MegaPacific's contract to supply the Commission on Elections with 1,991 automated counting machines because the deal was tainted "with graft and legal infirmities." Strangely, however, the Ombudsman on Oct. 2, 2006 absolved of any wrongdoing Comelec Chairman Benjamin Abalos and other officials involved in the deal.

(3) The alleged P532.9-million overpricing of the P1.1-billion 5.1-km President Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard in the Manila Bay reclamation area. The Ombudsman has upheld the allegation of whistle-blower Sulficio Tagud Jr., a former director of the Public Estates Authority, that the road was overpriced by 250 percent and the bridge by 67 percent. The Ombudsman has approved the filing of graft charges against 20 PEA officials, six auditors of the Commission on Audit and Jesusito Legaspi, owner of JD Legaspi Construction which constructed the road, described by Tagud as "the most expensive asphalt road in the country."

(4) The P200-million Jose Pidal case. In 2003 Sen. Panfilo Lacson accused Jose Miguel Arroyo, husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo, of amassing more than P200 million from campaign contributions to Ms Arroyo and putting the money in secret bank accounts, including that of "Jose Pidal." Last June, Lacson criticized Sen. Joker Arroyo, former chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee, for sitting on the Jose Pidal case.

(5) The $503-million Northrail project. Former Senate President Franklin Drilon said the project was one of the "colossal corrupt deals" of the Arroyo administration. In August 2005 the UP Law Center said the contract between Northrail and the China National Machinery and Equipment Corp. Group was illegal because of "questionable terms" and should be annulled. It also urged the filing of criminal, civil and administrative charges against some public officials and private individuals.

(6) The P728-million fertilizer fund scam. Former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante was accused of distributing P728 million in fertilizer funds to local leaders to ensure Ms Arroyo's election victory in 2004. Bolante fled to the United States, was arrested at the Los Angeles International Airport. He has chosen to be detained in the US rather than be deported to Manila.

(7) The $329-million National Broadband Network.

If the President is sincere in going after grafters in the government, she should order all the government agencies concerned, including the two offices she recently created, to go hammer and tongs after all the individuals and offices involved in these seven high-profile cases. The Estrada plunder case has shown that "big fish" can be caught, prosecuted, sentenced and put behind bars. From now on, there should be no pussyfooting and foot-dragging on graft and corruption.

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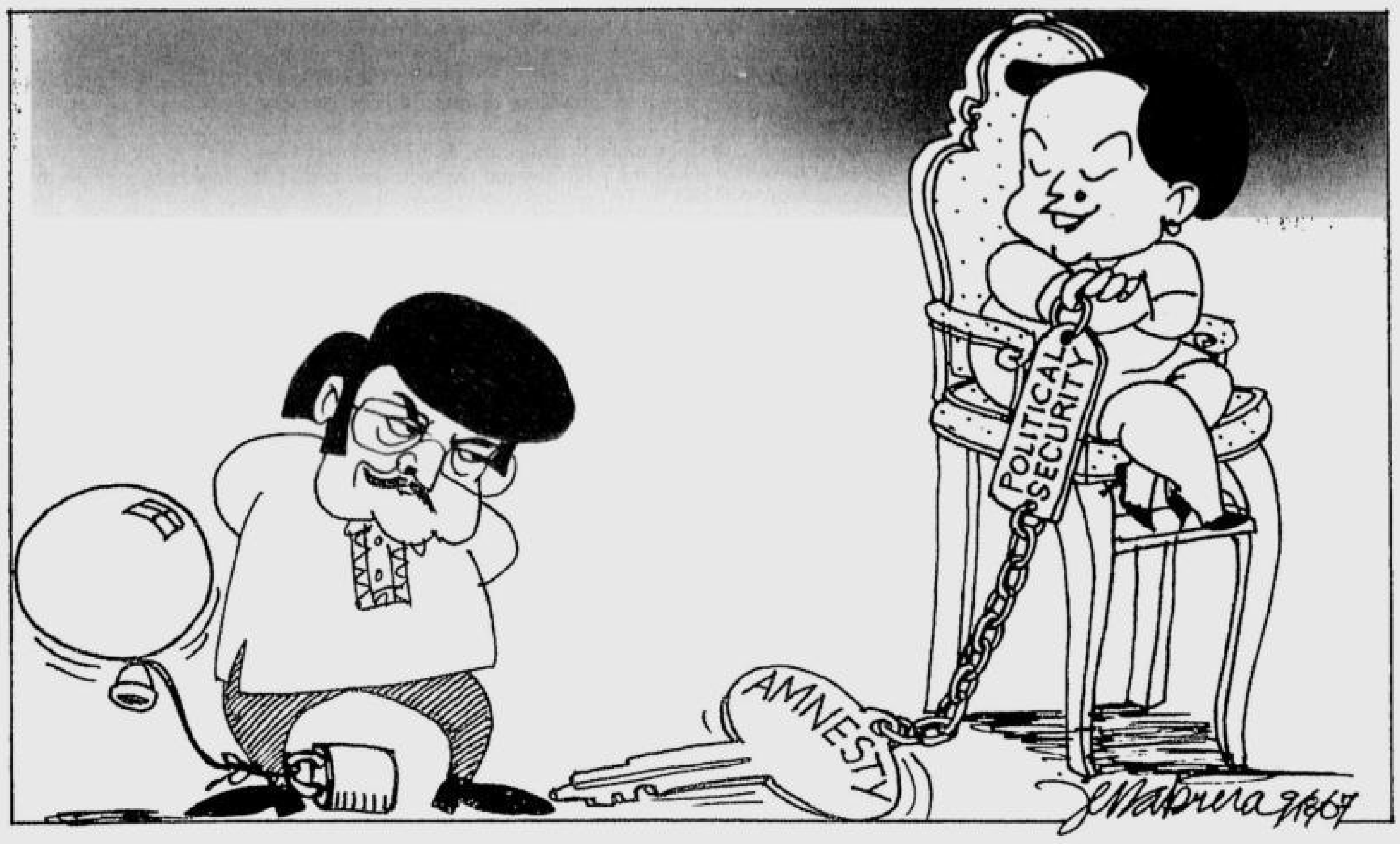


Avian 'pit stops'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

COME FRIDAY, ORGANIZERS FROM KOREA, Taipei and Thailand gather in Cebu City for the 3rd Philippine Bird Festival. That's also when thousands of birds from Siberia, northern Japan and environs start to fly south, along the East Asian Migratory Flyway, ahead of the winter cold. With the precision of nature's global positioning systems, 7 out of 10 birds will make "pit stops" in Philippine sanctuaries.

"Cebu's Olango Island is one such refuge," says Michael Lu of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines. Migrating birds recently touched down on empty ponds of Cebu's South Road Properties, creating an accidental refuge. "This is the only place where, at the right time, the threatened Asian dowitcher and Chinese egret are almost certain to be found."

The meet sets off the region's cycle of birdwatching: Seosan City, South Korea, in late October, Taipei and Bangkok in November. But attention is focused on one of the world's rarest birds, the Cebu flowerpecker (Dicaeum quadricolor), Lu explains. Once thought extinct, a few were recently spotted in Tabunan forest patches.

The country has 530 bird species, from the Visayan wrinkled hornbill to the Philippine eagle. But they run a gauntlet of slingshots, traps, air rifles and pollution—and official disdain.

Yet, they perform little-noticed but vital tasks, from curbing insect infestation to scattering seeds. In the shrinking North Negros forest reserve, 20 percent of trees wouldn't regenerate if the present rate of hunting persists, a University of British Columbia study estimates.

Like rivers, birds make up an early warning system. When rivers dry up or birds disappear, it signals that "the environment is under such stress that species, which have lived in them for thousands of years, can no longer survive," notes the Philippines Red Data book. An increasing number have been wiped out. Among the "feathered desaparecidos" are the Mindoro imperial pigeon and the Mindanao parrotfinch.

Destruction of habitats stem from the increasingly heavy "human footprint." Results of the 2007 census (overdue by two years) are not in yet. But many use the "guesstimate" of 89 million as current population, up from 19.2 million in 1948. Forest cover in Cebu has dwindled to almost zero. Only 7 percent of what was once were forested 297,179 sq. km. of the world richer biodiversity pool remains.

Today, 56 bird species are threatened. These include the Negros bleeding heart (Gallicolumba keayi) and scarlet-collared flowerpecker (Dicaeum retrocinctum). "Without immediate intervention, the Philippines is on the brink of an extinction crisis," notes Conservation International.

The country's patchwork of isolated islands, tropical climate and once extensive rainforests nurtured high species diversity. About 185 species are endemic, i.e, found nowhere else. These cluster in seven "Endemic Bird Areas": Mindoro, Luzon, Negros and Panay, Cebu, Mindanao and Eastern Visayas, the Sulu archipelago and Palawan.

Thus, the Philippines has among the highest rates of discovery worldwide. In the last 10 years, 16 new species of mammals were discovered. In May 2004, a possibly new species of rail Gallirallus was observed on Calayan Island. It is probably related to the Okinawa rail (Gallirallus okinawae). Discoveries may continue.

But being one of the world's biologically richest countries is past tense. Within biodiversity hotspots, only 11 percent of the total land area is protected. "What is not demarcated will not be managed," the perceptive Food and Agriculture Organization forester Cherukat Chandrasekharan once pointed out. National park boundaries here are blurred. There is patchy enforcement. How many parks exist? You get different answers.

But there are also silver linings. Palawan's Cockatoo Conservation Program slashed theft of this species' eggs. Rediscovery of species once presumed to be extinct, like the Cebu flowerpecker, spurred Cebu Biodiversity Conservation Foundation to protect the island's last few hectares of forest. Haribon Foundation and Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund organized a "Threatened Species Program."

Five new protected areas were proclaimed in 2002, including the Quirino Protected Landscape, which covers 206,875 hectares in northeastern Luzon. Biodiversity conservation corridors are being set up in the Sierra Madre, Palawan and Eastern Mindanao regions. But New Zealand cancelled funding for a Bohol protected area because of graft.

Field Museum in Chicago, Haribon Foundation and other groups are delineating "Key Biodiversity Areas." KBAs are discrete biological units that contain species of global conservation concern. They are conserved as a single unit. It builds directly from the "117 Important Bird Areas" defined by Haribon in 2001.

These require policy support and overhaul of mind-sets. "The portrait of bird species in decline is really a report on who humans are," writes Verlyn Klinkenborg in The New York Times. "In our everyday economic behavior, we seem determined to discover whether we can live alone on earth."

"Who we are depends as much on the richness and diversity of the biological life around us" as it does on our genes, he adds. We expect the world to adapt to changes we caused. But we have the right to expect adaptation only from ourselves. "The trouble with humans is that even the smallest changes in our behavior require an epiphany."

(E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com)

Bravery

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THE TRULY AWE-INSPIRING NEWS FROM where we stand was not the resignation of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, though that was awe-inspiring enough in itself. As everyone knows by now, Abe resigned because of scandals rocking his government, a falling approval rating, and crippling opposition to his hawkish policies, chief of them reviving Japan's military might.

But like I said, this wasn't the most awe-inspiring thing of all. What was, were the resignations of several other Cabinet members, chief of them the agriculture ministers. Over the last four months, Abe has had three agriculture ministers, and all three resigned out of shame over the messy state of affairs there. A fourth one, the agriculture minister preceding them, Toshikatsu Matsuoka, did not just resign from government, he resigned from life, committing suicide last May. He hanged himself hours before he was set to answer questions on bookkeeping anomalies.

The latest agriculture minister to go, Takehiko Endo, readily admitted his guilt. He was accused of getting government agriculture subsidies in 1999 for a farm cooperative he headed by exaggerating weather damage to its grape harvest. "I apologize," he said. "The series of scandals has added to the people's distrust." And he promptly quit.

I remember again the Japanese guy who helped finance the Cherry Hills subdivision in Antipolo readily admitting his guilt, weeping in shame over the deaths of many residents there, and promising to indemnify the victims' kin. This while his Filipino counterparts, the people who actually handled the project, including conducting the feasibility studies that concluded the project was feasible, were busy pointing to one another and to the world as the source of the bane.

To say that the Japanese conduct strikes a contrast with our own is to say that the temperature of heaven strikes a contrast with that of hell. What was the mess in the Japanese agriculture department? Well, it merely had one agriculture minister charged with bookkeeping fraud and another with obtaining excess subsidy for his cooperative. The "merely" there is a comparative term, "merely" in comparison to our case. What was the mess in our agriculture department not too long ago? It was an agriculture undersecretary believed to be the alter ego of the presidential spouse handing out hundreds of millions of pesos in fertilizer funds to congressmen, half of whom had no districts to fertilize, for the barefaced reason of fertilizing the presidential bid of the incumbent.

What did the Japanese ministers do in light of the accusations? They resigned from office or from this life. What did Joc-Joc Bolante do in light of the revelations? He refused to appear in the Senate, backed up by his sponsors in Malacañang who cited GMA's lunatic order forbidding public officials from testifying against her without her express permission, and eventually fled to the US seeking haven there. Thankfully, the US offers no haven to scoundrels—except where they stand to profit immensely from it—and threw the fellow in jail. He has languished there since then.

What does this say about the Japanese and us? Well, Japanese officials take the slightest whiff of scandal very, very seriously and hang their heads, literally and figuratively, in shame when it attaches to them. Filipino officials take the most brazen display of malefaction only laughingly and offer to resign but add hastily, "Joc only."

The contrast between heaven and hell goes on. The Japanese prime minister's party is crushed in an election, and he resigns, saying he no longer has the trust of his people. The Filipino President's party is crushed in an election and she clings to power, saying a president is only as strong as she wants to be, whatever that means. A Japanese prime minister's approval rating falls, and he resigns, saying the country is better left in other hands. The Filipino President's approval rating plunges past sub-zero levels from everybody believing she stole the vote, and she says she … is …sorry, it was a lapse in judgment, she'll punish herself by staying on. The Japanese prime minister is rocked by a scandal or two, and he resigns, saying he can no longer move from that weight. The Filipino President is rocked by one scandal after another, and she says life moves on, she stays on, the ZTE deal goes on, who the hell are the media, the public, and the world to stop them?

There and then, you see why Japan gets ahead and we don't. There and then, you see why Japan prospers while we get stuck in the bog, or move on only in the direction of sinking in it. Honor is not superfluous to progress, it is its beating heart. Honor is not an impediment to striving, it is its driving force. The only way to surpass yourself, to transcend yourself, to do the heroic thing is through boldness, and boldness is inextricably linked to honor. I've always thought it was no accident that the samurai is both fearless and honorable—those two qualities go together. And I've always thought it was no accident that the fox in Aesop's fables is both cowardly and unscrupulous (though sly and manipulative)—those two qualities go together as well.

We like to believe we are a brave people, *tapang* being one of the values we cherish, aided in no small way by myth and movie that depict the hero to be so. But *tapang* is not doing the idiotic thing, like refusing to back off from a knife fight during a drinking spree gone bad, it is simply doing the right thing, like not defending the ZTE deal in the Senate as a senator while one's law firm, ACCRA, has it for a client. Courage and honor are two sides of the same coin. The Japanese officials are *matapang*.

Ours are just *matapang ang apog*.

National congress vs hazing

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA'S RECOMMENDATION that the Arroyo administration renegotiate with China to make the NBN deal a build-operate-transfer scheme instead of a loan agreement is sensible, inasmuch as it's in accordance with the National Telecommunications Act of 1991. This law, authored by former Sen. John Osmeña, provides as policy direction that such projects are best left to the private sector and under BOT, so as not to require government guarantees and payment. It's also good that JDV stressed that his son Joey would no longer participate in case of a new bidding, even though his Amsterdam Holdings Inc. had originally offered to undertake this broadband project under BOT but lost to ZTE. But more than renegotiate the deal, the sentiment from various sectors is to scrap the ZTE deal altogether and subject the broadband proposal to more serious study. Answers are needed for such questions as: Does the country really need this project? Aren't there existing entities that, with a little adjustment, could provide the same services to LGUs without entailing new expenses? Two UP professors have opined that the NBN deal is unnecessary.

* * *

The President is being portrayed in some media reports as having abandoned her husband's sick bed a few months ago just to witness the signing of the ZTE deal in Boao, China. The underlying sinister implication is unmistakable. In fairness to her, however, I recall that way before Mike Arroyo was taken ill, GMA was scheduled to address the big annual conference in Boao attended by world leaders and co-chaired by former President Fidel Ramos. In fact, GMA's trip was to take her to a number of Chinese cities for about six days, but when Arroyo got sick, it was planned that she'd still address the world gathering and be away from his bedside for only 12 hours. The information I gathered was that her presence at the signing of the ZTE deal was squeezed in at the last minute at the airport terminal in China.

* * *

Sen. Panfilo Lacson is so persistent in calling presidential aide Medy Poblador to testify in the "Hello, Garci" hearing in the Senate. Poblador was said to have told the family of T/Sgt. Vidal Doble that if they were in any difficulty, they could call her. She also reportedly helped get Doble and former NBI Deputy Director Samuel Ong out of San Carlos Seminary. But there's a far more crucial witness whom Lacson has failed to summon: former President Joseph Estrada's mistress, Laarni Enriquez. Recently Makati Rep. Teddyboy Locsin reminded Lacson in a TV program that Ong had claimed that Enriquez gave him P2 million, which he turned over to Doble as payment for the "mother of all tapes." But despite this crucial allegation, said Locsin, Enriquez was never summoned by Congress to shed light on it. Who is Poblador compared to Enriquez?

* * *

That towering moral compass of our times, Magsaysay Awardee Jovito Salonga, resigned last Friday from the Sigma Rho fraternity which he and former Chief Justice Pedro Yap joined shortly after it was founded many decades ago. Salonga resigned after the recent death from hazing of a UP student seeking admission to the fraternity, pointing out that when he and Yap joined Sigma Rho, "hazing was not a prerequisite to admission."

Cecile Alvarez and I recently had as our guest former Sen. Joey Lina, who authored the Anti-Hazing Law in the 1990s. Lina feels so disgusted that the provisions he had built into the law to curb hazing were not carried out at UP. At Cecile's suggestion, Lina proposed that GMA declare one day in the year as National Anti-Hazing Observance to dramatize the need for schools to take action against this pernicious evil. I went farther by suggesting that a national congress against hazing be convened, to be participated in by UP, Ateneo, the Philippine Military Academy, the National Police Academy and various institutions that have a history of hazing, as well as the churches, business, parents and youth organizations, etc. The idea is to prod them to forever cast hazing aside and instead channel the youth's energies to more constructive nation-building activities. Lina offered the Manila Hotel, which he heads, as venue for this congress. I hope the schools will pick up his challenge.

* * *

Tale of two Georges: Last Sept. 11, friends and relatives of MacDonald's local big boss, George Yang, led by his wife Kristine and their children, held a surprise birthday party for him at the Manila Polo Club. Because of George's great love for classical music, his friends, led by another afficionado, Mia Protacio, invited just about all the leading musical talents here, such as Rachel Gerodias, Frankie Aseniero, the Cabahug brother-and-sister team, pianist Raul Sunico, the young singers of the Philippine Opera Company led by Karla Patricia Gutierrez, and the talents of the off-Broadway production "Something to Crow About." With all that talent, Yang's celebration became an impromptu concert that's hard to duplicate.

Another George who debuted last Sept. 13 was classical pop singer George Sison-Tagle, star of the concert produced by his mother, Beth Sison-Tagle of Newsmakers Inc., titled "Salute to George!" at the Crowne Plaza Hotel ballroom, for the benefit of Alay sa Kawal (ASK) Foundation. ASK had as special guests the doctors of V. Luna Hospital, led by its deputy CO Col. Elvira K. Pagtakhan, who have been treating soldiers wounded in combat. George clearly has a bright future ahead of him. Aside from the veteran performers such as Ivy Violan and the cameo performers from the Cabinet, Angelo Reyes and Bayani Fernando, George's show enabled the public to discover a new all-male singing group called Cinco Angelos, which will definitely make waves in the future. That concert reaffirmed what the world already knows: that we Pinoys exude music from our pores.

Honoring our mothers

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

(Introductory remarks made during the Second "Eminent Women in Politics" Lecture Series held yesterday at the Philippine Plaza Hotel, organized by the Miriam College-Women and Gender Institute, in collaboration with the Office of the Senate President.)

WHAT IS OUR PRIMARY DUTY AS FEMINISTS, and as women? I have always believed it is to acknowledge our mothers, the women who came before us, pay them homage for all that they have done to ease our way, and thank them for taking risks and blazing trails. And then we need to look back, at all the other, younger women following our trail, do everything we can to guide them, open doors, or kick them down, if need be, and create new paths of our own, challenging conventions, creating worlds of possibilities.

It is my distinct honor and pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you three women who blazed trails and opened doors for our generation and those that are to follow. In honoring them, the Women and Gender Institute of Miriam College and the Senate of the Philippines acknowledge not just their years of service in the legislature, but also their dedication to the cause of equality among men and women, to the betterment of society, and the preservation of democracy. We honor them, too, for their continuing service to our people, especially women, years after they have left government service and well into their golden, retirement years.

Indeed, the three women we honor in this Second Eminent Women in Politics Lecture Series serve as role models not just for women in or entering politics, but also for everyone contemplating retirement and worrying about the prospects for an active, vital life. We need only look at our three honorees this afternoon to know that this is not only possible, but also desirable, as they all have shown by the marvelous example of their lives.

* * *

SENATOR Eva Estrada Kalaw is well known not just for her membership in the Senate, where she spent two terms, and for her two terms, as well, in the martial law-era Batasang Pambansa, but also for her leadership in the political opposition during the Marcos regime.

Senator Kalaw paid a high price for upholding her principles. She was arrested and detained twice for alleged subversion, but upon her release continued to speak out against the abuses of the martial law enforcers. In the 1984 Batasan elections, Senator Kalaw led the opposition to a 5-1 victory in Manila, winning the highest number of votes for any candidate nationwide.

Born in Murcia, Tarlac, to Dr. Salvador Estrada and Demetria Reynada, the senator earned a degree in education from the University of the Philippines, and took up post-graduate studies in social work. In between her teaching stints at the Far Eastern University, National Teachers College and Centro Escolar College, she engaged in social work for which she was awarded a citation for being the "Outstanding Volunteer Social Worker of the Year."

Senator Kalaw founded and became the first president of the Jayceerettes organization; and founded and became the national chair of Samahang Filipina. She also served as director of the League of Women Voters and the Chamber of Home Industries of the Philippines. And for one peso a year, she served as special appointee to the Manila Council for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency.

In the Senate, she chaired the committees on games and amusements, tourism, and national minorities. She was married to Teodoro V. Kalaw, a businessman.

* * *

HELENA Z. Benitez, "Tita Helen" to many among the women's movement in the Philippines, served as a senator from 1968 to 1973, and has authored and co-authored laws on education, manpower and youth development, family, housing, and the environment.

Her involvement in education is not surprising, given that she belongs to the Benitez family which founded the Philippine Women's University, and where she now serves as chair of the board of trustees.

But Senator Benitez's service goes well beyond our shores. In 1966, she was elected chairperson of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. Not only was Senator Benitez the first Filipina to head the body, it was also during her term that the first major policy statement on women, that became the seeds of the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, or CEDAW, was issued.

In her political career, as well as in the years she spent as a representative of the country in various conferences and assemblies hosted by the United Nations, Senator Benitez has been a consistent and outspoken voice for the rights of women not just here but also around the world. Indeed, she calls her more than a decade's work in the UN as her "greatest contribution to the women's cause."

* * *

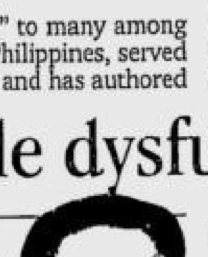
SENATOR Santanina Rasul entered politics in 1987, when she ran for senator, representing women and Muslims in the winning ticket of the Aquino administration that included many "non-politicians" among the lineup. She served as senator for two terms, from 1987 to 1992, and then from 1992 to 1995. She authored eight laws and served as chairperson of the committees on civil service and government recognition, and on women and family relations.

Born in Siasi, Sulu, she became an academic achiever early in life, obtaining a degree in political science, cum laude, from the University of the Philippines. The senator has spent much of her life in government service, starting as a public school teacher in her native Sulu, but has also devoted much of her time to non-government work, specifically in the fields of adult literacy and of peace building, work which she continues to pursue to this day.

Saguisag's projectile dysfunction

NEWSSTAND

John Nery



CHINA'S DONATION OF SOME $2 MILLION IN "non-lethal" military equipment to the Philippines last week does not only build confidence, in the words of Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, between the two countries. It also raises eyebrows.

The donation, if I read the reports correctly, brings the total amount of Chinese military aid to about $4.5 million since 2004, the year the countries signed their first agreement specifying "China's Provision of Military Aid Gratis to the Philippines." (A second one was signed in October 2006.) Aside from showing an increase in the number of personnel exchanges, the bilateral relationship may now be ready to move to the next stage in defense cooperation: The Philippines is seriously considering buying eight "utility helicopters" from China.

Does the country have much of a China card? Andrew Yang of Taiwan's Chinese Council of Advanced Policy Studies, a recognized expert on China's People's Liberation Army, doesn't think so. "There's not much evidence in that regard," Yang said on a visit to Manila late last month. "I think it's too early to say that the Philippine government is using China to balance US influence."

It may be, however, that he bases his admittedly off-the-cuff answers on a key assumption more important to Taiwan than to the Philippines. "US commitment to maintaining its security umbrella [in the region] is still there," he said.

* * *

It was, like a scuffle in a classroom, over almost as soon as it started. But those who caught the one and only skirmish between opposing counsel during the abbreviated promulgation of the decisions in the Estrada trial last Wednesday must have felt that, like in many a classroom, the class smart aleck managed to put one over the earnest plodder.

After Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio stood up and wondered about the defense counsel being apparently "at a loss," the Sandiganbayan justices cut him short—but not before the quick-witted ex-Sen. Rene Saguisag cut him, period. "Till the very end we have to put up with snide remarks. There shouldn't be a sore winner," said Saguisag.

And yet "snide" perfectly describes Saguisag's own uncalled-for remark. Sore winner, indeed.

* * *

Saguisag's role as a human rights lawyer during the darkest days of martial law cannot be gainsaid. His wit, his undoubted courage, his grasp of the situation (at a time when word of mouth and mimeographed samizdat were often the only sources of reliable, not necessarily accurate information) helped awaken an entire generation.

He tirelessly visited schools. I remember one visit, in particular, when he spoke in my school, in the old audio-visual room at the back of the auditorium. It was just him and maybe 10 students at the most. He did not complain; indeed, he explained national issues with his usual panache and answered our questions with unusual patience.

When he ran for senator in 1987, using a truly innovative "adopt-a-senator" campaign, I was one of the millions of eager voters who "adopted" him.

* * *

It pains me, therefore, to see him conduct himself, in his premature old age, like a cantankerous blowhard claiming monopoly of the truth.

I remember an old INQUIRER editorial which took Saguisag to task for breathtaking bad faith, after he described the Supreme Court's decision to invite amici curiae to the hearing on Fernando Poe Jr.'s citizenship case as "suggesting prejudgment."

What did Saguisag say, exactly? "In the old days," he had written in his newspaper column, "the Court's members were seen as the best and the brightest. No amici would be named for years."

Unbelievable bad faith. "Instead of welcoming the participation of eminent lawyers, Saguisag belittles the Court that was wise enough to invite them in the first place," the editorial read. "But Saguisag's evident contempt for mere mortals who were too weak to resist an appointment to the Supreme Court (unlike, say, himself) prevents him from seeing the obvious. The use of friends of the court is not a fig leaf to cover judicial nakedness. Rather, it is a tree wide enough to give shade to the anxious."

But these days, spreading anxiety about the administration of justice and the rule of law itself seems to be, entirely, Saguisag's legal philosophy.

After he heard the news about last Friday's reunion of public and private prosecutors involved in the Estrada trial, he launched a weakly lit but mean-spirited projectile in their direction. "That's premature ejaculation," he thundered.

Bad faith again. Why begrudge hardworking lawyers the chance to savor a historic legal victory? Because, unlike someone we know, they are insincere of conviction and impure of heart.

* * *

Last June, in a conversation with INQUIRER editors and reporters, Chief Justice Reynato Puno fielded a question about the possible legal consequences of an Estrada acquittal. Wouldn't acquitting ex-President Joseph Estrada of the crime of plunder contradict the landmark Estrada v. Arroyo ruling (of which he was, coincidentally, the ponente)? Estrada v. Arroyo started, famously, by noting that "the jugular issue involves the relationship between the ruler and the ruled in a democracy, Philippine style."

No, Puno answered directly, in a pastor's modest but forthright tone: "We decided a constitutional issue [then]. This plunder case is a criminal case. So it all depends on the evidence."

He did not speak about the possible political consequences of an acquittal; in contrast, all the idle talk from politicians on both sides of the Edsa II divide, about a "win-win" arrangement in the historic plunder trial, proved to be just that: idle, speculative, politically motivated—and untethered to the facts of the case.

* * *

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That big white house

YOUNG BLOOD

Alessandra Pineda

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I HAVE LIVED ONLY IN TWO HOUSES DURING MY ENTIRE life. The first house was where I lived for shorter period of time, but it was the more memorable of the two. My parents did not have their own place when they got married, and so my grandparents invited them to stay at their house. My mom's parents had it built during the 1970s for their family of eight. Theirs was quite a big family, but the house on 80 Whitefield St. in White Plains, Quezon City, served its purpose.

How I came to consider my grandparents house to be the better one, I have no clear idea. It was probably because of its rich exteriors. It had a vast backyard where my grandmother tended her potted plants and a scenic view of the neighboring village, Acropolis, where you could see three-year old kids riding their bicycles with their yayas in tow. There was a terrace that overlooked the street and saw its many secrets—from teenagers riding their scooters, to toddlers discovering how to walk.

It was a happy neighborhood where everyone knew your name and where you lived. I guess my knowledge of the ins and outs of the village came from the maids who constantly gossiped about the neighbor's new car or the driver across the street, and other things besides. They knew everything, and I mean everything.

My grandparents house had five bedrooms, six bathrooms, two living rooms, a kitchen with a walk-in pantry, and a small library which housed the family's most prized possessions: medical and law books plus hard-bound editions of Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys. My love for books is nothing unusual: everyone in the family simply loves to read.

But reading wasn't the only hobby I was engrossed with. As a child, I was obsessed with cooking and baking. I grew up inside the kitchen because my grandmother was an exceptional cook and she patiently tried to teach me the do's and don'ts of cooking. But she later decided to just pass on to me the family cookbook because all I ever seemed to learn was the art of breaking dishes. Cooking was not my thing, and it still isn't.

We moved to a smaller home somewhere in E. Rodriguez Avenue after spending just a few years in White Plains, but I kept going back to that house because I loved my grandparents' company. When you're constantly spoiled by your grandparents, it's hard to say no to their invitations to drop by and visit.

But happy circumstances don't last forever. At the age of 63, my grandmother had a stroke. Half of her body was paralyzed and she was confined to a wheelchair. I was six and couldn't understand how that one incident could change our lives.

When my grandmother was still able, she cleaned the house religiously and cooked for everyone in the family. She was never too busy to play with me or to teach me how to maneuver the floor polisher, which was a lot taller than me. Confined to a wheelchair, my grandmother couldn't do all of those things anymore and it broke my heart to see her always in bed. My grandfather hired another cook and another maid to clean the house. They did the job, but they couldn't do it as well as my grandmother. Something was missing, but I didn't know exactly what.

After some time, my grandfather rented out the White Plains house so he could use the money to pay for my grandmother's expensive medical treatment. They moved in with us. I was really happy about them staying with us, but I never felt comfortable with the fact that strangers were calling my White Plains haven their home. I was 12 and there were still strings attached. It was a messy divorce for me.

My grandmother died 11 years after she had her stroke. She was a devout woman and I am sure she has joined her Creator. I'm sure there are big white houses in heaven—with many orchids to tend to and many floors to polish. There must be a huge kitchen there with two ovens and a walk-in pantry. She cooks for everyone and maybe someday, she will be able to cook for me again too. My grandmother is home.

Sometimes my parents allow me to pass by the house in White Plains. The house is still big and white but somehow it doesn't feel like home anymore. To me, it looks like any other house with a big gate and huge windows and nothing more, because I know that if I step inside the house, I wouldn't see the same furniture or the same familiar faces. White Plains is different now. It isn't home to me anymore.

I have only lived in two houses during my entire life. The first house was the most memorable, though our stay there was short-lived. They say time is of the essence, but I guess that if you come down to it, it doesn't matter how many years you have lived in a particular house to call it a home. You may refurnish the place, repair the broken windows, and paint the walls a pretty yellow, but it remains your home for it is there that you find the people you love.

There will be other houses, better ones probably. But what good is a house if it is empty and stripped of its memories. I would give anything to get my White Plains haven back, but then I have my family with me: my mom and my dad, my brother and my sister, my grandfather and my aunt. This is my family and wherever they live is home to me.

Alessandra Pineda, 17, is a Communications freshman at the Ateneo De Manila University.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Writers' fate

"In this country, if you're a writer, you get stepped on, you get killed, you disappear… Really, the first ones attacked are the writers, the journalists, because they (the government) want to keep things hidden and they want to keep people silent, obedient."

—Multiawarded novelist Ninotchka Rosca, one of three visiting officers of Gabriela Network USA

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Helping build the future by spreading optimism

I AM WRITING TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE for the story "Model cities' secrets of good governance." (INQUIRER, 9/2/07) Indeed, it was very kind of the INQUIRER to highlight the positive experiences of the cities of Marikina, San Fernando and Tagbilaran.

Among other problems the country is facing, cynicism and fatalism should rank high. I have always believed that more than just the economic and political crises, it is the people's lack of resolve to commit to long-term solutions and their inherent suspicions about government that are working against us.

When people themselves refuse to better their own lot or, worse yet, refuse to trust their government to do it for them, there is no doubt that the window of opportunity is too small for comfort. Anyone who doubts this only has to look at the long lines at lotto betting stations and at the US Embassy.

Unfortunately for us, we cannot rise above our present difficulties unless we overcome both biases. What happened in the past should not be a reason to face the present and the future with despair.

I salute the INQUIRER for doing its share to highlight the positive events taking place in our society and for giving our people enough reason to believe in themselves and enough motivation to push forward. People need all the encouragement that they can get.

The efforts of the Institute for Solidarity in Asia to draw out the best from participating cities are doing wonders for us. At the end of the day, we ourselves will determine the fate of our nation. We still have a long way to go in Tagbilaran, but it is a lot different when people are more optimistic about the future.

—DAN NERI LIM,
mayor, Tagbilaran

Insensitive GMA's nation of street sweepers

"GMA ON DROPOUTS: LET THEM sweep streets." (INQUIRER, 8/22/07)

President Macapagal-Arroyo was referring to the nearly 6 million out-of-school youth, plus the undetermined number of illiterate adults, who could benefit from a proposed alternative education module—eEskuela—for school dropouts and illiterates willing/able to learn using the World Wide Web.

As pointed out, GMA's suggestion is at least more realistic than Marie Antoinette's famous one-liner: "Let them eat cake!" But it is just as calloused, insensitive and arrogant.

The French queen went to the guillotine. GMA, sadly, will be with us for another three excruciating years, to the bitter regret of those among us who cheered when she assumed office and prayed for her protection when the Erap hordes marched upon Malacañang in May 2001.

God forbid that her political allies should succeed in extending her stay in Malacañang by means fair or foul.

Is it not enough that we have the world's largest contingent of overseas workers, doctors-turned-nurses and professionals practicing their trade, craft, profession outside the country, without whose generous dollar remittances, our country would have even more candidates for *camineros*? Must we also condemn our school dropouts and illiterate adults to a life with little or no prospect for anything better than permanent servitude or destitution?

Where is the 7.5-percent second-quarter growth (INQUIRER, 8/31/07) that supposedly has outstripped the performances of our progressive neighbors (e.g., Hong Kong, Malaysia and Indonesia) and sent our country trailing just behind star performers like Singapore and China, whose annual growth rates are 8.6 percent and 11.9 percent, respectively? Couldn't this impressive claim translate into actual employment and better education for our children?

The news story also reported that former Education Secretary Florencio Abad admitted that the country's learning problems extend beyond the schoolroom and poor quality education—to the abject poverty of parents who are compelled to send their children to school on empty stomachs.

More bad news for the proposed eEskuela, after Ramon Sales was eased out as head of the Commission on Information, Communications and Technology reportedly "for speaking out." And the cyber-education program that would benefit far-flung barangays is now in danger of being scuttled because of yet another government scandal brokered (again!) by Comelec Chairman Benjamin Abalos, a deal that calls to mind Comelec's failed computerization program.

For decades now, we have been regarded as a nation of maids—and not without basis. The word Filipina was once defined in a dictionary to mean "housemaid."

A nation of street sweepers? Just as well, perhaps. We certainly have a lot of rubbish to sweep out.

—BLANCHE D. GALLARDO,
258 Calatagan, Ayala Alabang Vill.,
Muntinlupa City

A national language, but only in principle

"WHEN CONGRESSMAN LOPEZ SPOKE at the Batasan, did he speak in Filipino, Pilipino or Tagalog?" I am referring to Fr. Joaquin Bernas' Aug. 20 column.

In my opinion, whatever language he used, it doesn't really matter. I would dare say that Pilipino or Filipino is the Philippines' national language only in principle.

I am from the Mountain Province, and there was a time when I had to stay in Surigao del Sur for a month. Very few people there could speak Tagalog or Filipino or Pilipino, and I couldn't speak any of the "Mindanaoan" languages. The parish priest and I ended up speaking English to each other. There was an old World War II veteran who spoke good English and he was the only villager whom I could speak to.

I think we'd better return English as a medium of instruction in the classroom to prepare would-be overseas Filipino workers. Nowadays, our OFWs are not just domestic helpers; they are also teachers of English.

—TASHA POSCHOR,
tposchor@yahoo.com

ANOTHER DEMOLITION: MMDA operatives dismantle shanties built atop a creek on Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. in Makati City.

Demolitions making it worse for many mired in urban poverty

WE WISH TO INFORM PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo that we, the urban poor, have no reason to be happy over her announcement of a 7.5-percent growth in the economy.

Instead of finding relief under her presidency, we experience hardship, aggravated by the ruthless demolition of our houses, which has displaced tens of thousands of urban poor families. The demolition cam paign is being done with haste in the nam of the government's "Urban Modernization Plan." It violates existing laws, specifically the Urban Housing Development Act, which provides at least for adequate consultation and compensation equivalent to a total of 60 days of the current minimum wage rate for each affected family.

Whatever relocation programs the government presents is only for show, because only about 10 percent of the affected families are eventually accommodated in relocation areas. Livelihood opportunities in these areas are also scant, thus only worsening the problem of hunger and poverty for many relocated families.

The government has also made a scapegoat out of the urban poor. We are blamed when floods occur, we are blamed for the garbage crisis, we are blamed for many other problems plaguing our cities, we are blamed even for being poor. Indeed, the government has made it a habit to heap the blame on us—instead of taking responsibility for these issues—in order to justify its demolition campaign.

The Arroyo administration is driving thousands of poor Filipino families into the streets. Under her presidency, we can only expect the problems of homelessness, hunger and poverty to worsen.

—CARMEN "KA MAMENG" DEUNIDA,
chair,
Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap
(Kadamay)

Process on electricity rate increases open and transparent

I WAS SADDENED WHEN I READ THE letter "Wanted transparent, reasonable power fees." (INQUIRER, 9/10/07) There seems to be a lot of people misinformed about our power industry, one of the most important industries in the country.

The AGRA (automatic generation rate adjustment mechanism) means that any increase in the power rates of the National Power Corp. (as authorized by the Energy Regulatory Commission or ERC) can be "automatically" included in Meralco's bill to its customers. Why? The ERC believes that Meralco does not need to ask permission from the ERC to collect any increase that the ERC has allowed the Napocor.

If there is no AGRA, Meralco has to have ERC's permission before they can collect the increase. This means the July 2007 increase will happen over and over again, as any Napocor increase will certainly be collected by Meralco before the day is done.

Also, Meralco has to petition ERC before it can increase its own rates. This means that the Electric Power Industry Reform Act is working—Napocor and Meralco have to petition ERC for any increase in their rates. That is as transparent as one can get. Reasonable? It's your opinion. Transparent? Most certainly.

—ROBBIE TAN,
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Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City

'Second Japanese invasion' in the works

THE JAPAN-PHILIPPINES ECONOMIC Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) will pave the way for the "second Japanese invasion," albeit without the brutal force of arms that characterized the first one in World War II.

JPEPA even pre-arranges the total surrender, by the modern-day "Makapili" in the Arroyo administration, of the country's sovereignty to Japan.

JPEPA gives maximum freedom to Japanese investments. Under JPEPA, the Philippine government is committed to reduce and eliminate tariff on more than 1,000 product lines such as live animals and fish, fresh fruits and vegetables and processed and semi-processed agricultural products. Japan can invest in almost all areas of our economy, exploit our resources and labor and repatriate profit.

But the Philippines cannot use such tools as tariffs and import restrictions and cannot require Japanese investors to contribute to the country's research and development, use local materials and transfer technology. The Philippines cannot give preferential treatment to Filipino entrepreneurs.

Under JPEPA, Japanese investors will enjoy the same rights and privileges as Filipino investors.

Worse, the Philippine government cannot enact new measures to regulate business or to craft new policies necessary for our national development, if these are incompatible with JPEPA, without the consent of Japan. The treaty also obliges the country to amend or repeal its existing laws to harmonize with JPEPA.

Farmers fear that JPEPA's thrust to increase local production for export will threaten the country's food security and independence, and aggravate the land problem due to the expansion of Japanese commercial farms.

The senators must uphold our national sovereignty and reject the JPEPA. The Filipino people must be vigilant and resist the second Japanese invasion by whipping up widespread public opposition to this agreement.

—ALICE RAYMUNDO, secretariat,
Task Force Food Sovereignty (TFFS),
87 Malakas St., Pinyahan, Quezon City

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Presidencies and piracies

COMMENTARY

Jigger S. Latoza
John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues

THE VERDICT IS OUT: JOSEPH ESTRADA is guilty of plunder!

The mixed reactions are understandable, given the prominence of the accused and the yawning political divide the plunder case has created since Joseph Estrada's ouster in 2001. Everyone has a right to react to the decision based on one's personal convictions and affiliations. Still, others have an equal right to react to those reactions. Let these be expressed openly.

Leaving the legal options to lawyers, what is worth pondering at this time is the subliminal message conveyed by the said Sandiganbayan verdict to civilized society, or to polities where the rule of law, and not of men, is an established norm.

The verdict on Estrada is undoubtedly a verdict on our justice system as well. By rendering the guilty verdict despite veiled threats of a consequential social unrest or even violent protests from die-hard Erap fans, the Sandiganbayan justices effectively and clearly conveyed a message to public officials, more particularly to those on the totem poles of political power, that in this country justice is, indeed, blindfolded. Justice doesn't see nor hear nor feel political power and is, therefore, not daunted by it.

Through its decision, the Sandiganbayan has stressed that no one—not even the highest official of the land—is above the law. The relevant laws contemplated in this case are perhaps best captured in these words prominently displayed on the main menu page of the Sandiganbayan website: "Public office is a public trust. Public officers and employees must at all times be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty and efficiency, act with patriotism and justice and lead modest lives."

The strong message implied in the decision is likewise sent to the corridors of power in Malacañang Palace for its current occupant and her family to reckon with. That same message also goes to what-used-to-be-august halls of both houses of Congress, for the "witch hunters" and "whistle-blowers" in the Upper House and the "tongressmen" in the Lower House to heed. That same message should echo in the courts, for scalawags therein to think over. That same message should reverberate in all public offices, from national government agencies and constitutional bodies to provincial capitols, down to city, municipal and barangay halls. Yes, that same message should send shivers down the spines of those involved in the fishy National Broadband Network deal.

Now, for the first time, Filipinos can hold their heads high before the Japanese and the South Koreans and tell them that in this country, too, there is a high sense of honor in public service. That sense of honor, that unequivocal standard of right and wrong, transcends politics. Now, for the first time, Filipinos can proudly proclaim that in this country's drive toward transparency, honesty and accountability in public service, we don't catch the small fish only; we get to catch the biggest ones, as well.

Had Estrada been acquitted despite the overwhelming evidence against him, the subliminal message would have been that in this country we confuse presidencies with robberies. Had Estrada been freed, we would have demonstrated to the world the inability of our justice system to draw the line between the roles of a president and the roles of a pirate. For, as Saint Augustine said, it is justice that distinguishes a kingdom from a band of robbers, an emperor from a pirate. In our context, to paraphrase Augustine, we can say that it is justice that distinguishes a presidency from a piracy, a president from pirate.

In this regard, what the saint and sage wrote in his City of God merits re-reading and pondering:

"Justice being taken away, then, what are kingdoms but great robberies? For what are robberies themselves, but little kingdoms? The band itself is made up of men; it is ruled by the authority of a prince, it is knit together by the pact of the confederacy; the booty is divided by the law agreed on. If, by the admittance of abandoned men, this evil increases to such a degree that it holds places, fixes abodes, takes possession of cities, and subdues peoples, it assumes the more plainly the name of a kingdom, because the reality is now manifestly conferred on it, not by the removal of covetousness, but by the addition of impunity. Indeed, that was an apt and true reply which was given to Alexander the Great by a pirate who had been seized. For when that king had asked the man what he meant by keeping hostile possession of the sea, he answered with bold pride, "What you mean by seizing the whole earth; but because I do it with a petty ship, I am called a robber, while you who does it with a great fleet are styled emperor."

Depo Provera not on Pfizer's list

IN HIS SEPT. 5 COLUMN "EVANgelical Catholics," Michael Tan cited Pfizer as the producer of the injectable contraceptive, Depo Provera. We would like to clarify that Pfizer does not manufacture or sell this product. Pfizer deleted Depo Provera from its roster of medicines when it acquired Pharmacia in 2003, the original manufacturer of Depo Provera.

We also wish to inform Tan that Pfizer's support for Gawad Kalinga (GK) is through Gawad Kalusugan, a GK and Pfizer Foundation (PPFI) community health program that empowers GK residents to be capable health-care workers in their own community.

—MILLETTE ASUNCION-ARNEDO,
public affairs and legal director,
Pfizer Inc.,
23/F Ayala Life-FGU Center,
6811 Ayala Avenue, Makati City

Cruz misunderstands Joker's stance on Senate probe into the Garci tapes

NEAL CRUZ ENGAGES IN OBScurantism by pratingly distorting Sen. Joker Arroyo's remarks that "we cannot at this late stage in our profession be accused of being ignorant of the law not only as legislators but as lawyers" as "trying to prevent the reinvestigation of the Garci scandal." (INQUIRER, 8/31/07)

The Garci tapes scandal is worn-out slippers. It has been investigated (1) by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon's defense committee, which did not bring it to closure; (2) by five House committees on the initiative of then-Rep. Francis Escudero, which closed it with a final committee report; and (3) in the failed impeachment bid against Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Yet, no member of the Senate has opposed the investigation. Senator Arroyo pointedly said that the Senate's oversight power to investigate cannot be stultified by Executive Order 464 which he successfully challenged in the Supreme Court on behalf of the Senate.

What divides the Senate is whether the illegally taped Garci tapes can be used in light of Sec. 3 of the Bill of Rights, Republic Act 4200 and, lately, the anti-terrorism bill, all of which forbid its use.

These distinctions cannot be lost on Cruz because he has exhaustively written about the Garci tapes in his columns and heard much of it in the Kapihan sa Maynila which he hosts.

It is lamentable that Cruz, at this late stage of his writing career would, paraphrasing Senator Arroyo, open himself to accusations of journalistic doublespeak.

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Exec's ₱4-M house raises eyebrows

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE DIRECTOR OF the Department of Budget and Management in Central Luzon has built a house worth P4 million here although she receives only P26,000 monthly from the government, a check by the INQUIRER showed following reports from some employees in the agency.

The two-story house of DBM regional director Elisa Salon sits on a 297-square meter lot on the third street of the upscale subdivision Suburbia in Barangay Maimpis here, according to Transfer Certificate of Title (TCT) 615422-R titled in her name on March 27, 2006.

The land has a market value of P715,236.25, according to a tax declaration of real property as of Aug. 16, 2007.

Salon reported ownership of that land in her Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) for 2006.

A ledger of bills showed that electricity consumption in Salon's house started in May this year. Salon has lived in it for three weeks now after the house's blessing in August.

In an interview on Monday, Salon did not deny ownership of the house but said the construction cost did not reach P4 million, the amount estimated by an architect and an engineer who checked the house.

A DBM source said Salon pooled the amount from the money given her by contractors of the Department of Public Works and Highways. Salon, however, denied this.

She also denied allegations that she has unexplained wealth, saying she spent only P1.8 million to build the house.

She said she borrowed the money from a friend as she awaited the release of her P1.8-million loan from the Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig fund).

The TCT showed an entry of mortgage, dated July 5, 2007, for a P1.2-million loan from HDMF. It has not been released up to this time, Salon said.

She identified the lender but asked that his name not be mentioned in the report.

As for the land, she said this was sold to her by an HDMF employee who migrated to New Zealand. From two personal loans worth P120,000 and P350,000, she said she paid a total of P470,000 for the land.

Salon said she would pay the P1.8-million loan at P15,000 monthly for 15 years. The loan comes with an 11.5-percent annual interest rate.

She said she could pay the loan because as a government employee with the rank of "Director IV," she gets at least P26,000 in salary, P12,000 in representation and transportation allowance, P8,000 in discretionary fund and P5,000 for procurement monthly.

She has remained single and does not support any children, she said.

Salon, 50, a native of Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan, has worked for the DBM for 28 years. Most of her assignments have been in Central Luzon provinces since 1987.

"It's my retirement house. *Wala akong ibang naipundar* (I do not have any property). Rather than rent, I'd like to own one," she said.

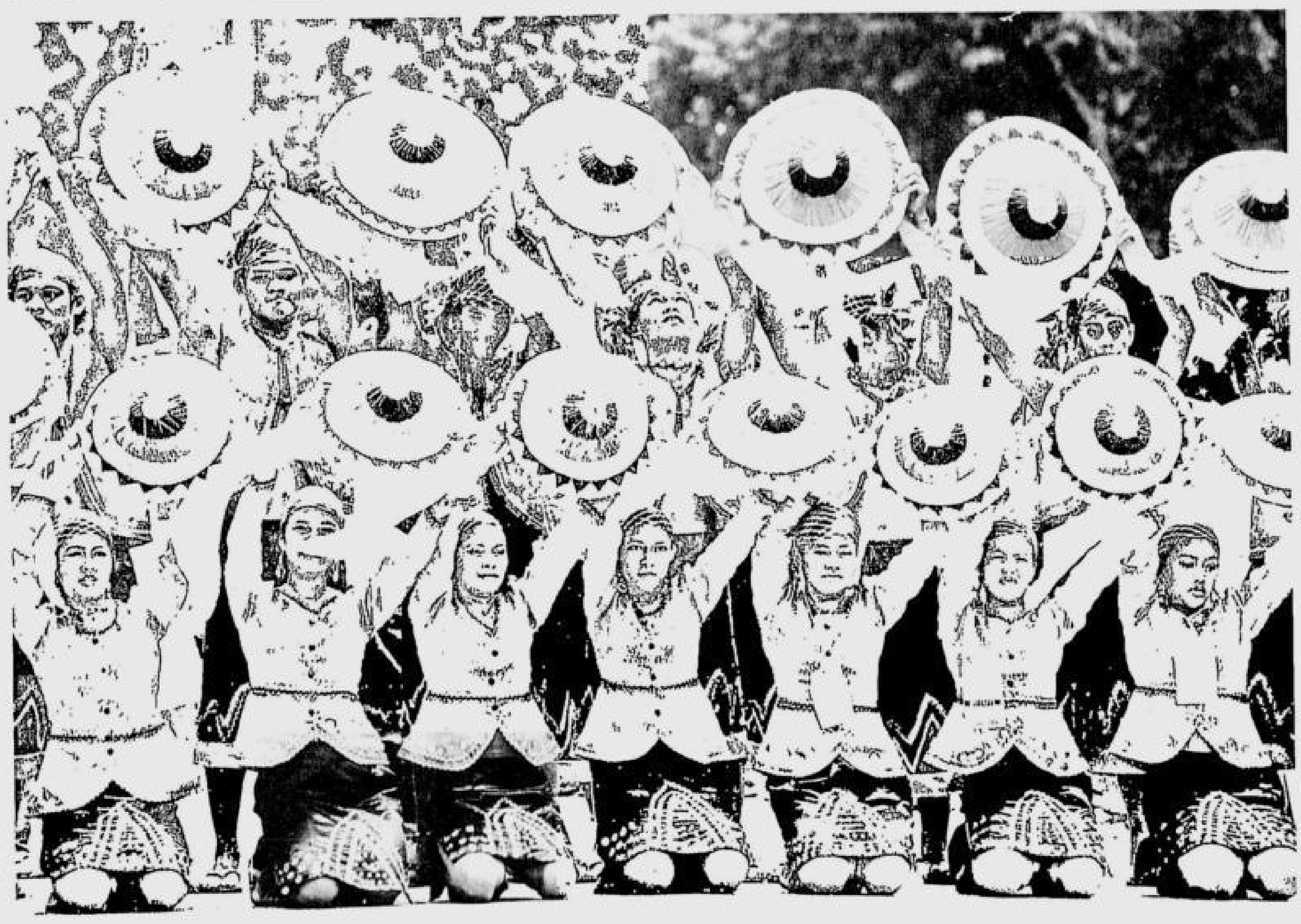
But her SALN showed that the Suburbia property was one of three pieces of real property she has acquired for a total of P1.522 million since 2001.

She also owns a house and lot at the Villa Julita in San Fernando and residential lot in Bacolor town.

In the Villa Julita property, Salon said her brothers have assumed payments for the P250,000 loan she obtained in 2000 from the Social Security System, paying P1,593 monthly. She said she had planned to demolish that house because it was termite-infested and build a new house on it.

But she said was discouraged from proceeding with the plan because it was more costly to do that. This, she said, was how the Suburbia house came about.

Her SALN also showed she still has other loans worth at least P1.158 million. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*



SUBANON GREETING EDWIN BACASMAS

A contingent of Subanon tribe dancers greets President Macapagal-Arroyo on her arrival Monday at the Provincial Government Complex in Dao, Pagadian City, Zamboanga del Sur, where she addressed the province's 55th anniversary celebration.

Comelec: Priesthood not obstacle in polls

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Commission on Elections' second division has dismissed the petition of lawyer Ely Pamatong to remove Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio on the basis of his being a priest.

"A careful examination of [Comelec Resolution No. 7800] reveals that there is no provision expressly and specifically prohibiting or disqualifying candidates for governor simply because they are priests by profession," part of the eight-page resolution, dated Sept. 5, read.

"Considering that the privilege of holding an office is a valuable one, laws prescribing qualifications and disqualifications for office [are] liberally construed in favor of eligibility," it said.

The resolution was penned by Commissioner Florentino Tuason Jr., who in July gave due course to the petition of defeated gubernatorial candidate Lilia Pineda to have the votes recounted in Pampanga.

Commissioners Rene Sarmiento and Nicodemo Ferrer concurred.

"It is only those who do not possess the required qualifications or those who are by law disqualified are ineligible for public office," the resolution said.

It said a candidate's priesthood was not an impediment to run for an elective post.

Panlilio, 53, ran in the May 14 elections on the clamor of Kapampangan voters who did not want their choices limited to Pineda, wife of suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, and reelectionist Mark Lapid, son of Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid.

Panlilio has been a priest for 25 years, serving parishes and leading the Social Action Center of Pampanga before he took a leave from his priestly ministry.

But Pamatong, who ran in the 2004 presidential election and who garnered only more than 600 votes in the Pampanga gubernatorial race this year, said Panlilio violated the Constitution and the Roman Catholic Church's Canon Law when he ran as governor.

The Comelec's second division said the Constitution, the Local Government Code of 1991 and Comelec Resolution No. 7800 set no grounds to ban priests for elective posts. Candidates must be Filipino citizens, of legal age, a resident of the place where they are seeking office and not convicted of crimes.

Panlilio said he was "thankful" that the Comelec's second division exercised objectivity in ruling on Pamatong's petition and hope that the same would be done by the Comelec en banc on his motion for reconsideration to junk Pineda's recount bid.

Panlilio said he or his supporters did not cheat in the election, adding that his 10,000 votes lead had been shaven by poll irregularities.

He won by a margin of 1,147 votes against Pineda. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

ROUNDUP

Dengue plagues Cebu

CEBU CITY—Health officials in Cebu City are doubling their effort to fight dengue after nine children died of the mosquito-borne disease over the last three weeks.

Cebu City has already recorded 20 dengue-related deaths with 940 cases from January to the second week of September this year.

The figure was 45 percent higher compared to last year's figure of 550 cases with 15 deaths, according to Cebu City's coordinator on dengue control, Dr. Raymond Ogan.

Ogan said that the dengue situation in two of the city's urban barangays—Bulacao and Pardo—has reached outbreak level because of seven deaths in the early part of September.

Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas

11-yr-old kills 2-yr-old

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—An 11-year-old boy is now in social welfare custody after he admitted strangling to death a 2-year-old child in Barangay Buenavista, police said Monday.

Supt. David Martinez, city police chief, said the child offender gave himself up to officials in the barangay after the victim's body was found floating in a river on Friday, three days after, he said, he strangled the victim.

Barangay Buenavista is approximately 70 km north of the Puerto Princesa town center.

Police and social welfare officials withheld the identities of both the confessed killer and the victim.

Redempto Anda, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Highway repair nears completion

LEGAZPI CITY—The reconstruction of the Andaya Highway is now 88-percent complete and is expected to be fully completed by the end of October this year, the Department of Public Works and Highways said.

Orlando Roces, regional director of DPWH in Bicol, said the highway had been damaged by the passage of overloaded trucks and the unstable foundation of the pavement due to the clayish nature of the soil in the area.

Roces added that the DPWH had temporarily patched potholes in the main road linking the Bicol region to Metro Manila to assure tourists visiting the Peñafrancia Festivities of a smooth ride even if the P500-million reconstruction of the highway has not yet been completed.

Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon

GMA no-show a frustration

TORRIJOS, Marinduque—Thousands of Marinduqueños were disappointed when President Macapagal-Arroyo did not show up for the 107th anniversary celebration of the Battle of Pulang Lupa here where Filipino soldiers made a gallant stand during the Filipino-American War.

Expecting GMA's presence, thousands of residents of this province, local officials, public and private employees and students, braved the searing heat and the 7-km uphill trek going to the Pulang Lupa Shrine.

Worse, the participants had to traverse the muddy road leading to the shrine, as it rained the previous night.

Ms Arroyo was supposed to deliver a keynote address for the event but she failed to send a representative in her place.

Gerald Gene R. Querubin, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Capiz tourism draw: Seafood

ROXAS CITY—A Capiz provincial board member wants to capitalize on the province's abundant seafood as a come-on for tourists.

Provincial Board Member Alfonso Bediones Jr. appealed to hotels, resorts, restaurants and utility vehicle operators to improve their facilities and services to make Capiz more attractive to tourists.

Bediones noted that the tourism receipts of Capiz reached P592 million in 2006.

He said the province should maximize its strength as the country's seafood capital.

Felipe Celino, Inquirer Visayas

Health funds elude LGUs, says gov

DAVAO CITY—LOCAL GOVERNMENT units have remained ineffective in providing efficient health services to their constituents, 16 years after health services were devolved to them from the national government.

Sarangani Gov. Miguel Dominguez said the lack of funds among LGUs was the main factor why local government-run healthcare facilities are not well-maintained.

He said Sarangani has an annual budget of 10 percent for health but the amount has remained deficient.

He said there is also the perennial lack of healthcare personnel.

In his province for example, Dominguez said that there is only one government doctor on duty.

"Nurses are regularly resigning in favor of jobs abroad and finding replacements have proved to be more difficult," he said.

But Dominguez said they try hard to find ways to deliver basic services to the people.

These include partnering with the private sector, such as the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP).

"It is important to identify the support we need in investing in grassroots healthcare," he said.

In Paglat, Maguindanao, Mayor Abdulkarim Langkuno said they tapped communities to help the local government in its effort to deliver basic health services.

Langkuno cited an example when residents pooled their resources together so that the construction of the municipal health center and barangay health centers could be finished.

In Cagayan de Oro City, the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. has embarked on a project that aims to prevent children from contacting diseases.

Dubbed "the Essential Health Care Package for Filipino Children," PhilHealth recently distributed toothbrush, toothpaste, soap and the de-worming pills to children in Misamis Oriental.

Walter Bacareza, PhilHealth field operations chief in Northern Mindanao, said toothbrush and toothpaste are very basic but these are important in starting a healthy life.

"We hope to see children freed from diseases that have been hampering their educational growth for years now," Bacareza said.

Dr. Bella Monse, a German dentist, who serves as consultant of the Department of Education Cagayan de Oro Division, told the INQUIRER that tooth decay remains one of the primary reasons for absenteeism among pupils.

"Well, there are other diseases that are alarming like dengue, meningococcemia but these comprised less than one percent of the diseases that hound public school children which is linked to poor health habits including tooth decay, parasites in the intestines and even malnutrition," Monse said.

Rizalene Acac and Grace Albasin, Inquirer Mindanao

HOUSING INSPECTION PHOTO FROM NHA

Vice President Noli de Castro, also housing czar, visits the Northville 4 Socialized Housing Project in Marilao, Bulacan with Federico Laxa (left), general manager of the National Housing Authority. De Castro was clear on one message to settlers—there would be no relocation sites without schools.

MAKING SURE
A member of the Presidential Security Group inspects the guns of soldiers prior to the arrival of President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Pagadian City Airport in Zamboanga del Sur on Monday.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Army to bring plan to counter NPA prop to elementary pupils

CITY OF MATI, DAVAO ORIENTAL—The military said it was keen on bringing its anticommunist campaign to elementary schools here because the rebels have also started recruiting children.

"We really have to save the precious lives of these innocent children, who are now the target of recruitment of the New People's Army (NPA)," said 1st Lt. Michael Yuson of the Philippine Army's Task Force Domino.

Speaking to the INQUIRER at the sidelines of the first monthly meeting of the provincial peace and order council held at the Menzi Hotel here on Tuesday, Yuson said the recruitment of children into the communist movement has become a cause for concern.

"What future do these children have in rebel camps? They will just die at a young age. We should protect them at all cost," he said.

Yuson said under the anticommunist campaign, they will educate children about the "evils of communism."

"So the students will know the truth about the communist insurgency and its deep effects on their lives," he said.

Yuson said the military also decided to bring the anti-insurgency campaign to the campuses so that they could counter the communist black propaganda against the government.

"This way, we will be able to refute all their lies against the government, we will be able to answer all the accusations being leveled against the Armed Forces," he said.

Yuson said although the move was quite late because communist rebels have long been in schools, the military still considered it as a big step.

But Yuson clarified that their campus campaign was not aimed at militant students.

"It is definitely not a crackdown against activist students. This is just our simple response to the black propaganda that the communists have been peddling against the government," he said. *Ferdinand Zuasola, Inquirer Mindanao*

Power plant pays ₱160M in taxes after talks

LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN—The provincial government has finally collected P160.84 million in real property taxes from the Sual coal-fired power plant in Sual town.

"The amount covers the power plant's unpaid tax obligation last year, its full payment this year and the penalties," said Rafael Baraan, provincial administrator.

Gov. Amado Espino Jr. received the check from Federico Puno, president of the Team Energy Corp., the new owner of the power plant.

Team Energy Corp., a consortium of the Tokyo Electric and Power Co. and Marubeni Corp., had bought Mirant Corp.'s interests in major power assets in Luzon in June.

Pay on time

Espino and Puno also signed a memorandum of agreement requiring Team Energy Corp. to make updated payments of its real property tax obligation to the province, "while any subsequent delinquency would incur penalty and charges."

"I hope this would be the last time that we will sit on the negotiating table and I expect that there will be no more signing of MOA next year," Espino said.

"What is due the province should be paid on time," he said.

The tax payment consisted of P142,650,232 as the plant's tax liability and P18,187,904.58 as accrued interest, penalties and related charges.

Ramon Crisostomo, provincial treasurer, said the real property tax was computed based on the 10 percent assessment level as provided under the provincial tax ordinance.

Allocations

He said P80.42 million or half of the total payment will go to the Special Education Fund (SEF) and will be shared equally by the province and the municipal government of Sual.

The other half, he said, will be shared by the province, which will get P28,146,673.90 (35 percent); Sual town, P32,167,627 (40 percent); and the host barangay, P20,104,767 (25 percent).

The SEF share of the province will go to the provincial school board for the construction and repair of school buildings, purchase of books, chairs and other related supplies and projects.

The 35 percent share of the province will go to the provincial government's general fund.

Aside from the taxes on its machineries and equipment, the Sual power plant will also pay a P2-million land tax annually. *Gabriel Cardiñoza and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

CAR DEALERS' APPEAL

GMA told: You can stop Cebu smuggling

CEBU CITY—THE APPEAL TO stop rampant car smuggling in Cebu has been directed at President Macapagal-Arroyo following similar appeals made to Congress.

Councilor Jack Jakosalem, chair of the Cebu City council's committee on transportation, said it was within the power of the President to stop the smuggling.

Losses

Car dealers said they were incurring huge losses as a result of the smuggling.

They said data on the number of cars sold and registered point to one fact—that smuggling has become rampant.

Last year alone, car dealers said the Land Transportation Office in Cebu registered 25,000 more cars than what were sold through legitimate channels in the entire Central Visayas region.

The smuggled cars, especially those classified as luxury, were sold at half, or just a fraction, of what they would have cost if they had been sold through legitimate channels, the car dealers said.

Discrepancies

Jakosalem said he would urge the city council to pass a resolution appealing to Ms Arroyo and Finance Secretary Margarito Teves to exert serious efforts in putting a stop to smuggling, especially of used vehicles.

He said he would furnish the President and Teves with copies of the letter of the Cebu Auto Dealers Association (Cada) pointing out the discrepancy between the number of cars that were registered by the LTO against the number of cars sold through legitimate channels last year.

Cada quoted the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers in the Philippines (Campi) as reporting 1,686 cars and 3,274 other vehicles had been sold by legitimate dealers in Central Visayas last year.

But data from the LTO in Cebu showed 3,584 cars and 21,637 other vehicles had been registered also last year.

Alarming volume

The discrepancy, Cada said, represented the number of cars that have been smuggled into the region.

He said the volume of importation of surplus and used vehicles last year was alarming and has brought losses to legitimate car dealers and the government. He didn't have statistics, however.

Cada said these records showed that for every car sold by legitimate dealers, five are being registered by the LTO.

Jakosalem said rampant car smuggling has also contributed to heavy traffic in Cebu since the smuggled cars add to congestion in the city's streets.

BMWs, Benzes

He quoted car dealers as saying sales dropped because smuggled cars find their way into Cebu's black market at lower prices.

Without citing statistics, Jakosalem quoted dealers as saying the number of used and brand new BMWs, Mercedes Benzes and other European cars has risen.

These cars would cost P9-P10 million when bought from legitimate dealers, but in Cebu's black market, a brand new BMW could be bought for P3-P7 million, he said.

A Mercedes Benz that cost P9 million in a legitimate car dealership could be bought for P4 million in the black market, he said.

"The price difference is so big," he said.

The Bureau of Customs in Cebu insisted the smuggled luxury cars did not enter through the Cebu International Port (CIP), saying they could have been smuggled through other ports and were brought to Cebu as domestic cargo. *Jolene Bolambot, Inquirer Visayas*

Cordillera execs battle to preserve autonomy

BAGUIO CITY—CORDILLERA officials want to know the public pulse on Cordillera autonomy to help stave off the region's "political disintegration."

The Regional Development Council on Thursday said the Cordillera's political integrity has been threatened by the Philippine National Police when it reverted last week the administration of the Kalinga and Apayao police force to the Police Regional Office in Cagayan Valley.

Kalinga and Apayao used to belong to Region 2, before Malacañang enforced a 1987 peace agreement with slain rebel priest Conrado Balweg that forged a Cordillera administrative region.

CHILDREN play near a statue of a Cordillera soldier.

EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Revived autonomy

Benguet, Ifugao, Mt. Province and Abra, which used to belong to Region 1, now compose the Cordillera Administrative Region, alongside the two interior provinces.

Juan Ngalob, Cordillera director of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) and acting RDC chair, said the survey, currently being hammered out for bidding before the end of September, is the first stage in a revived autonomy movement.

He said Cordillera leaders agreed to pursue autonomy before the campaign is overtaken by political events such as "federalism," or by "administrative fragmentation," which is how they described the Kalinga and Apayao police reorganization.

Director General Oscar Calderon, PNP chief, issued an Aug. 30 circular restoring the Kalinga and Apayao police to their original units in Cagayan, on the heels of the bloody clash between law enforcers, town personnel and a squatter's colony in Rizal, Kalinga.

PNP directive

Calderon said the transfer smoothens operational efficiency there. To reach both provinces from Baguio requires a 12-hour road trip.

But in a strongly worded resolution, the RDC said the Cordillera People's Liberation Army, Balweg's old militia, could consider Calderon's decision as "another reneging act on the part of the national government [which] could cause serious embarrassment [to] the present administration."

The RDC said supervising security for the region, even in far-flung Kalinga and Apayao, "is best pursued within the administrative framework of the Cordillera as a region."

Letter to GMA

In a Sept. 5 letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the region's congressmen also asserted the Balweg peace pact when they urged her to intervene in the police reorganization.

"The creation of CAR as a special region preparatory to autonomy … is the result of a proactive struggle by the Cordillera people," wrote Kalinga Rep. Manuel Agyao, Apayao Rep. Elias Bulut Jr., Ifugao Rep. Solomon Chungalao, Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan, Benguet Rep. Samuel Dangwa, Mountain Province Rep. Victor Dominguez, and Abra Rep. Cecilia Luna.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. gave the region's revived autonomy project an P18-million start-up fund, out of this year's General Appropriations Act.

Ngalob said Neda has organized workshops that teach regional leaders the art of "economic diplomacy," under the tutelage of Malacañang's protocol officer, in order to allow them to negotiate their own international trade and loan deals for the Cordillera.

Guarding autonomy

Neda has also organized workshops that train Cordillera towns to use the geographic information system in planning out projects.

Ngalob said the RDC wants the region "to be politically and fiscally autonomous," regardless of how the autonomy campaign is defined by the survey's results.

The region had always guarded its "administrative autonomy." *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

New task force vs extortionist, terror group formed by Army

KORONADAL CITY—A MILITARY-led antiterror group was formed last week amid threats of attack from a supposed extortion syndicate blamed for the series of bomb explosions here this year.

South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Avance-Fuentes told the INQUIRER on Thursday that Task Force Marbel (TFM), composed of soldiers from the 10th Division Recon Battalion in nearby Tupi town, has started functioning.

She said its duties included preventing the Al-Khobar gang from staging bomb attacks here.

Asked if the creation of the task force did not duplicate the police's job, Fuentes said she viewed it as a challenge to the police instead.

But Senior Supt. Robert Kiunisala, South Cotabato police director, said he would rather look at the creation of the task force as a complement.

He said the TFM would really provide help in the police effort to prevent terror attacks here.

"They wanted to help and secure the people," he said.

Kiunisala said the police were trying their best to prevent attacks by the Al-Khobar, which has been trying to extort money from the Yellow Bus Line (YBL).

The YBL management has repeatedly rejected the group's demands.

On Aug. 3, a protestant preacher was killed while 12 others were wounded in separates bomb explosions inside and outside the depot of the YBL here. *Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao*

Palace prefers pardon for Erap over amnesty

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drop the amnesty idea as well as the plan to file a motion for reconsideration in the Sandiganbayan so the government could "set in motion" the process for a presidential pardon.

"We will have problems [if he opts for amnesty] because amnesty is for political offenders only and not for plunderers," Apostol said yesterday of the ousted President whom the antigraft court's Special Division convicted of plunder on two counts last week and sentenced up to 40 years in prison.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Ms Arroyo's political adviser, said he favored a presidential pardon for his ex-boss.

But first, he said, the Estrada camp must make a formal and official request for it.

"[Because we are] public officials, this has to come to our official attention. Everybody should try to make it easy for everybody else. There has to be a request. We cannot grant a pardon if there is no request," Puno, who was also the interior secretary during Estrada's term, told the INQUIRER on the phone.

At any rate, Apostol said in an ambush interview at the Palace, Ms Arroyo had issued Proclamation No. 1377 on Sept. 7. If concurred in by both chambers of Congress, it would grant a general amnesty to communist groups and "those who have committed political offenses."

"It's already in Congress," Apostol said, adding that the amnesty option was "not feasible" for Estrada.

Then he said, joking, "It's hopeless—unless Erap says he is a communist."

By Christmas

Even Speaker Jose de Venecia, who first proposed an "all-encompassing" amnesty program that would cover Estrada, now prefers a pardon for the man.

He said the pardon could be granted in December, or three months after the court's guilty verdict.

"If it's only for Estrada, I prefer a pardon," De Venecia said in a phone interview. "It could come as soon as the situation calms down, say on the eve of Christmas."

De Venecia said that while his original proposal covered the "enemies of the state"—such as "dissidents, rightists, leftists, separatists, including destabilizers"—it would not work if applied solely to Estrada's case.

"You can't use amnesty for an individual or solitary case," said De Venecia, who helped craft the amnesty measure that covered rebel military officers in the 1990s. "It should be for a mass of people."

Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, spokesperson of Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino, had earlier said the ousted President would consider an amnesty but would want to first read the "fine print."

"He's open to amnesty, but he needs to make sure of the provisions. It needs to be studied," Rodriguez had said. "The No. 1 provision is that there should be no admission of guilt. Pardon is really out."

And any offer of amnesty "has to come from Malacañang," Rodriguez said yesterday in a media forum at the Manila Hotel. "President Estrada is not asking for it."

Estrada has repeatedly maintained his innocence and claimed that the antigraft court's Special Division was created to convict him.

He and his legal team have decided to file a motion for reconsideration at the Sandiganbayan before Sept. 27.

15 days

Apostol said Malacañang would be willing to grant Estrada absolute pardon, as long as he applied for it.

"Ang itinutulak namin sa kanya (What we are proposing) is to grant him an absolute pardon. Anyway, he's already 70, and he's eligible [for it]," Apostol said. "We can set [it] in motion, so he must allow 15 days to lapse and allow the Sandiganbayan ruling to become final and executory."

Apostol said Estrada would only prolong the process if his lawyers took the judicial route:

"So our appeal to him is [not to seek reconsideration] and allow the court's decision to become final and executory. Then he will negotiate with our President. Then our President will start the process ... for him to avail himself of a pardon. But that remains in his hands—if he agrees. If not, nothing will happen."

Apostol pointed out that elevating Estrada's case to the Supreme Court—as his lawyers had earlier considered doing—could take five to 10 years, and that Ms Arroyo had only three more years in office.

"So the ball is in the hands of Erap," he said, adding that Ms Arroyo was only waiting for the latter "to show interest" in a pardon.

The only recourse

Puno said requesting a pardon was the only recourse for Estrada: "The justice system has taken its course and there is no legal option except a pardon. Amnesty is out of the question because it is a legislative act."

He argued that "a pardon does not necessarily mean an admission of guilt."

"The point is to get the country past this politically adversarial relationship. This is a good vehicle for reconciliation and it's good for calming the national temperament," he said.

Puno said there was "unanimity in the Cabinet" for the President to pardon Estrada.

"[National Security Adviser] Bert Gonzales has said so. So has Serge Apostol. Personally, needless to say, I am in favor [of it]," he said.

In fact, Ms Arroyo has "communicated willingness to go halfway on the issue," Puno said. "I hope Mr. Estrada will go halfway, too."

Puno also suggested that Estrada's request for a pardon could indicate that it was being made without prejudice to an appeal.

All out

But according to Rodriguez, Estrada is going all out for vindication through legal processes.

"He believes that he will be acquitted either by the Sandiganbayan or the Supreme Court on the remaining two counts of plunder," Rodriguez said, adding that Estrada had expressed openness to the idea of amnesty only "for the sake of national interest."

De Venecia said he would meet with Rodriguez and House Minority Leader Ronaldo Zamora to discuss the mechanics of the "all-encompassing and wide-ranging" amnesty he first proposed last month.

He said discussions would also involve Deputy Speaker Simeon Datumanong and House Majority Leader Arthur Defensor.

"We will see if we can craft an amnesty that will address all the problems of the so-called enemies of the state," De Venecia said.

If such a measure becomes available, it will be another option for Estrada, he said, adding:

"An all-encompassing amnesty is the beginning of national unity."

Good instincts

If an offer of amnesty is made and Estrada accepts it, the opposition will back him, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay told reporters at City Hall.

"It's up to him. Erap has always had good instincts," said the mayor, who is also president of the United Opposition.

But he stressed that the terms should make it clear that there was no admission of guilt on Estrada's part, and that the penalties imposed would be nullified.

It should be "as if no offense was committed," he said.

Binay said, however, that any discussion of amnesty was premature because Estrada's plunder conviction still had a long way to go before it became final.

"Besides, he has not categorically stated that he would accept [amnesty]," Binay added. "Whatever his decision, we'll have to respect it." *With reports from Alcuin Papa, DJ Yap and Tina G. Santos*

Roxas files pardon resolution

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SEN. MAR ROXAS YESTERDAY CALLED on his colleagues to back his resolution calling on President Macapagal-Arroyo to issue a pardon to her convicted predecessor "at the appropriate time and on humanitarian grounds."

In Senate Resolution No. 135, Roxas said Joseph Estrada deserved a pardon because "at 70 years old, he has spent six years under detention, has shown remarkable humility, and is entitled to live the rest of his life quietly and in peace with members of his family."

Roxas also said the majority of the people supported a pardon for Estrada because of their "widespread and compelling sentiment" to "end partisan strife."

But for Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, the ousted President's eldest son, it's thanks but no thanks. *With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

GMA men face contempt

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"somewhere in the north," fearing death threats.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the defense committee that leads the joint hearings, said: "I wish we can provide a resolution without allowing the situation to deteriorate into a full-blown institutional conflict. But we can't stand idly by while the Senate is reduced to a powerless institution."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita replied on behalf of Abu, Danga and Presidential Assistant Remedios Poblador, who Doble claimed arranged for his return to the military headquarters before he could corroborate Ong's claim about the "Hello Garci" tapes.

EO 464

Ermita invoked the Supreme Court's May 2006 ruling on Executive Order No. 464 and asked for a "bill of particulars" into the subject of the inquiry and the proposed legislation.

He said the summons neither contained a questionaire nor the legislation that was being contemplated out of the hearings as the Court has required.

In a separate letter, Ermita claimed it was "premature" to invite Poblador to the hearing "unless and until" Doble and Bishop Socrates Villegas, who brought Doble back to Camp Aguinaldo, could "state the wrongdoing, if any, committed" by Poblador.

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, in a separate reply, also invoked the Supreme Court's ruling, as well as Memorandum Circular No. 108 which Ms Arroyo issued shortly after the high court struck down EO 464.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Villegas did not reply to the summons. Neither did Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro to whom the invitation to Col. Paul Sumayo, Capt. Frederick Rebong and Capt. Lindsay Rex Sagge of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines was addressed.

The hearing yesterday was attended by 13 senators.

Court ruling

In May 2006, the Supreme Court struck down EO 464 and upheld the right of Congress to compel executives and military officials to attend congressional inquiries "in aid of legislation."

But the high court also ruled that the President may invoke executive privilege in matters covering confidential or classified information.

"We might end up with a showdown," Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the committee on constitutional amendments, said after the hearing.

"This is more for the survival of the Senate for check and balance of the executive department. It's a crazy system if we can't get people in the government to come to our hearings," said Sen. Alan Cayetano, chair of the blue ribbon committee.

Gordon and Cayetano are cochairs in the hearings.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the Senate should "assert its rights" while Sen. Benigno Aquino III said the dispute might again be brought before the Supreme Court.

'Very irritated'

Administration Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Juan Ponce Enrile moved that the subpoenaed officials should already be cited for contempt. But Sen. Joker Arroyo suggested the all-member caucus to adopt a common stand.

Santiago said she was "very irritated" by the government excuses.

"We are left with no other option. They should be cited for contempt, otherwise the public would lose respect on the Senate," she said. "Still, I realize that as much as possible we must avoid a direct confrontation." *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

Abandoned kids finding hope ...

From page A1

Welfare Services in Tagaytay City.

The four-day conference—attended by some 200 foreign and local delegates involved in child welfare and placement—is hosted by the Inter-Country Adoption Board (Icab), an agency attached to the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The conference was organized to discuss and address the issues affecting abandoned Filipino children—how adoption can be a means of parental development and change, and possible areas of collaboration between partner-agencies to uplift the lot of disadvantaged children through foreign adoption.

Last resort

Noah is among the 3,604 Filipino children adopted by foreign families since the Inter-Country Adoption Act was implemented in 1995, according to Icab.

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Palace prefers pardon for Erap over amnesty

From page A1

drop the amnesty idea as well as the plan to file a motion for reconsideration in the Sandiganbayan so the government could "set in motion" the process for a presidential pardon.

"We will have problems [if he opts for amnesty] because amnesty is for political offenders only and not for plunderers," Apostol said yesterday of the ousted President whom the antigraft court's Special Division convicted of plunder on two counts last week and sentenced up to 40 years in prison.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Ms Arroyo's political adviser, said he favored a presidential pardon for his ex-boss.

But first, he said, the Estrada camp must make a formal and official request for it.

"[Because we are] public officials, this has to come to our official attention. Everybody should try to make it easy for everybody else. There has to be a request. We cannot grant a pardon if there is no request," Puno, who was also the interior secretary during Estrada's term, told the Inquirer on the phone.

At any rate, Apostol said in an ambush interview at the Palace, Ms Arroyo had issued Proclamation No. 1377 on Sept. 7. If concurred in by both chambers of Congress, it would grant a general amnesty to communist groups and "those who have committed political offenses."

"It's already in Congress," Apostol said, adding that the amnesty option was "not feasible" for Estrada.

Then he said, joking, "It's hopeless—unless Erap says he is a communist."

By Christmas

Even Speaker Jose de Venecia, who first proposed an "all-encompassing" amnesty program that would cover Estrada, now prefers a pardon for the man.

He said the pardon could be granted in December, or three months after the court's guilty verdict.

"If it's only for Estrada, I prefer a pardon," De Venecia said in a phone interview. "It could come as soon as the situation calms down, say on the eve of Christmas."

De Venecia said that while his original proposal covered the "enemies of the state"—such as "dissidents, rightists, leftists, separatists, including destabilizers"—it would not work if applied solely to Estrada's case.

"You can't use amnesty for an individual or solitary case," said De Venecia, who helped craft the amnesty measure that covered rebel military officers in the 1990s. "It should be for a mass of people."

Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, spokesperson of Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino, had earlier said the ousted President would consider an amnesty but would want to first read the "fine print."

"He's open to amnesty, but he needs to make sure of the provisions. It needs to be studied," Rodriguez had said. "The No. 1 provision is that there should be no admission of guilt. Pardon is really out."

And any offer of amnesty "has to come from Malacañang," Rodriguez said yesterday in a media forum at the Manila Hotel. "President Estrada is not asking for it."

Estrada has repeatedly maintained his innocence and claimed that the antigraft court's Special Division was created to convict him.

He and his legal team have decided to file a motion for reconsideration at the Sandiganbayan before Sept. 27.

15 days

Apostol said Malacañang would be willing to grant Estrada absolute pardon, as long as he applied for it.

"*Ang itinutulak namin sa kanya* (What we are proposing) is to grant him an absolute pardon. Anyway, he's already 70, and he's eligible [for it]," Apostol said. "We can set [it] in motion, so he must allow 15 days to lapse and allow the Sandiganbayan ruling to become final and executory."

Apostol said Estrada would only prolong the process if his lawyers took the judicial route:

"So our appeal to him is [not to seek reconsideration] and allow the court's decision to become final and executory. Then he will negotiate with our President. Then our President will start the process ... for him to avail himself of a pardon. But that remains in his hands—if he agrees. If not, nothing will happen."

Apostol pointed out that elevating Estrada's case to the Supreme Court—as his lawyers had earlier considered doing—could take five to 10 years, and that Ms Arroyo had only three more years in office.

"So the ball is in the hands of Erap," he said, adding that Ms Arroyo was only waiting for the latter "to show interest" in a pardon.

The only recourse

Puno said requesting a pardon was the only recourse for Estrada: "The justice system has taken its course and there is no legal option except a pardon. Amnesty is out of the question because it is a legislative act."

He argued that "a pardon does not necessarily mean an admission of guilt."

"The point is to get the country past this politically adversarial relationship. This is a good vehicle for reconciliation and it's good for calming the national temperament," he said.

Puno said there was "unanimity in the Cabinet" for the President to pardon Estrada.

"[National Security Adviser] Bert Gonzales has said so. So has Serge Apostol. Personally, needless to say, I am in favor [of it]," he said.

In fact, Ms Arroyo has "communicated willingness to go halfway on the issue," Puno said. "I hope Mr. Estrada will go halfway, too."

Puno also suggested that Estrada's request for a pardon could indicate that it was being made without prejudice to an appeal.

All out

But according to Rodriguez, Estrada is going all out for vindication through legal processes.

"He believes that he will be acquitted either by the Sandiganbayan or the Supreme Court on the remaining two counts of plunder," Rodriguez said, adding that Estrada had expressed openness to the idea of amnesty only "for the sake of national interest."

De Venecia said he would meet with Rodriguez and House Minority Leader Ronaldo Zamora to discuss the mechanics of the "all-encompassing and wide-ranging" amnesty he first proposed last month.

He said discussions would also involve Deputy Speaker Simeon Datumanong and House Majority Leader Arthur Defensor.

"We will see if we can craft an amnesty that will address all the problems of the so-called enemies of the state," De Venecia said.

If such a measure becomes available, it will be another option for Estrada, he said, adding:

"An all-encompassing amnesty is the beginning of national unity."

Good instincts

If an offer of amnesty is made and Estrada accepts it, the opposition will back him, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay told reporters at City Hall.

"It's up to him. Erap has always had good instincts," said the mayor, who is also president of the United Opposition.

But he stressed that the terms should make it clear that there was no admission of guilt on Estrada's part, and that the penalties imposed would be nullified.

It should be "as if no offense was committed," he said.

Binay said, however, that any discussion of amnesty was premature because Estrada's plunder conviction still had a long way to go before it became final.

"Besides, he has not categorically stated that he would accept [amnesty]," Binay added. "Whatever his decision, we'll have to respect it." ***With reports from Alcuin Papa, DJ Yap and Tina G. Santos***

Roxas files pardon resolution

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SEN. MAR ROXAS YESTERDAY CALLED on his colleagues to back his resolution calling on President Macapagal-Arroyo to issue a pardon to her convicted predecessor "at the appropriate time and on humanitarian grounds."

In Senate Resolution No. 135, Roxas said Joseph Estrada deserved a pardon because "at 70 years old, he has spent six years under detention, has shown remarkable humility, and is entitled to live the rest of his life quietly and in peace with members of his family."

Roxas also said the majority of the people supported a pardon for Estrada because of their "widespread and compelling sentiment" to "end partisan strife."

But for Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, the ousted President's eldest son, it's thanks but no thanks. ***With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan***

GMA men face contempt

From page A1

"somewhere in the north," fearing death threats.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the defense committee that leads the joint hearings, said: "I wish we can provide a resolution without allowing the situation to deteriorate into a full-blown institutional conflict. But we can't stand idly by while the Senate is reduced to a powerless institution."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita replied on behalf of Abu, Danga and Presidential Assistant Remedios Poblador, who Doble claimed arranged for his return to the military headquarters before he could corroborate Ong's claim about the "Hello Garci" tapes.

EO 464

Ermita invoked the Supreme Court's May 2006 ruling on Executive Order No. 464 and asked for a "bill of particulars" into the subject of the inquiry and the proposed legislation.

He said the summons neither contained a questionaire nor the legislation that was being contemplated out of the hearings as the Court has required.

In a separate letter, Ermita claimed it was "premature" to invite Poblador to the hearing "unless and until" Doble and Bishop Socrates Villegas, who brought Doble back to Camp Aguinaldo, could "state the wrongdoing, if any, committed" by Poblador.

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, in a separate reply, also invoked the Supreme Court's ruling, as well as Memorandum Circular No. 108 which Ms Arroyo issued shortly after the high court struck down EO 464.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Villegas did not reply to the summons. Neither did Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro to whom the invitation to Col. Paul Sumayo, Capt. Frederick Rebong and Capt. Lindsay Rex Sagge of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines was addressed.

The hearing yesterday was attended by 13 senators.

Court ruling

In May 2006, the Supreme Court struck down EO 464 and upheld the right of Congress to compel executives and military officials to attend congressional inquiries "in aid of legislation."

But the high court also ruled that the President may invoke executive privilege in matters covering confidential or classified information.

"We might end up with a showdown," Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the committee on constitutional amendments, said after the hearing.

"This is more for the survival of the Senate for check and balance of the executive department. It's a crazy system if we can't get people in the government to come to our hearings," said Sen. Alan Cayetano, chair of the blue ribbon committee.

Gordon and Cayetano are cochairs in the hearings.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the Senate should "assert its rights" while Sen. Benigno Aquino III said the dispute might again be brought before the Supreme Court.

'Very irritated'

Administration Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Juan Ponce Enrile moved that the subpoenaed officials should already be cited for contempt. But Sen. Joker Arroyo suggested the all-member caucus to adopt a common stand.

Santiago said she was "very irritated" by the government excuses.

"We are left with no other option. They should be cited for contempt, otherwise the public would lose respect on the Senate," she said. "Still, I realize that as much as possible we must avoid a direct confrontation." ***With a report from Michael Lim Ubac***

Abandoned kids finding hope ...

From page A1

Welfare Services in Tagaytay City.

The four-day conference—attended by some 200 foreign and local delegates involved in child welfare and placement—is hosted by the Inter-Country Adoption Board (Icab), an agency attached to the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The conference was organized to discuss and address the issues affecting abandoned Filipino children—how adoption can be a means of parental development and change, and possible areas of collaboration between partner-agencies to uplift the lot of disadvantaged children through foreign adoption.

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Atienza to call envoys to meet on poaching

By TJ Burgonio

ALARMED BY REPORTS OF RAMPANT POACHING IN Philippine waters, Environment Secretary Lito Atienza will call to meeting officials of the embassies of China and other countries to put a stop to what he called the "worst form of piracy."

"Poachers are pirates of the worst kind. They know what they're doing, and they still do it," Atienza said, following reports that Chinese fishermen were caught recently gathering and killing endangered sea turtles in the waters off Sulu.

Atienza said he would ask the missions of China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam and Japan to send representatives to a briefing on the department's plan to take the lead in prosecuting the poachers.

"We will throw the book at them (poachers). They will never learn unless and until we give them the full impact of the law," he told reporters. "The certainty of arrest and punishment is the best deterrent against this act," he added.

"We don't want them (neighboring countries) to be shocked by our heavy-handedness," he said, explaining his call for a meeting.

The World Wide Fund for Nature had expressed renewed alarm over the poaching incidents after authorities seized endangered turtles from a boat moored between two islands in Sulu archipelago on Sept. 2.

The agents found 50 dried, 58 freshly gutted and 28 live turtles on the unmarked vessel crewed by 19 Chinese fishermen.

Most of the turtles were green sea turtles, internationally classified as an endangered species, according to WWF.

The crew was escorted to Bongao, the capital of Tawi-Tawi, where they were charged with violation of the Philippine Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act.

Atienza said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources will file additional charges against the poachers for violation of the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act.

"We will file our cases so that their detention will be sustained," Atienza said.

The authorities had earlier arrested the Chinese crew of the fishing vessel M/V Hoi Wan after they were caught poaching off Tubbataha Reef in December 2006. The case is pending, according to WWF.

Two months earlier, 24 Chinese fishermen aboard the M/V Kwok Wai Ming were caught poaching off Mangsee island in Balabac, Palawan. Prosecutors initially dismissed the case, but later reversed it.

Only one case, that of 17 Chinese poachers caught with 54 dead turtles, had led to a conviction, but the fishermen were pardoned after paying fines "in order not to strain relations between the Philippines and China," according to WWF.

In the last nine years, more than 900 foreigners, 660 of them from China, have been arrested and charged with poaching in the waters of Palawan alohe, according to the WWF.

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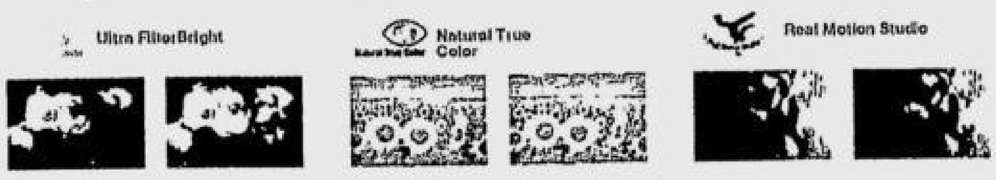

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Imelda: I just need right shoes

By Jeannette I. Andrade

IMELDA MARCOS IS HEALTHIER THAN most of us.

This was the assurance made by the former first lady's spokesperson after Marcos was given a clean bill of health and discharged yesterday afternoon from St. Luke's Medical Center.

A hospital official, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak, quoted Marcos as saying: "I would have to buy new shoes ... the right kind of shoes," as doctors led by Joven Cuanang, her personal physician and St. Luke's medical director, told her the pain in her knees she had complained about was caused by the wrong type of shoes she had worn during a recent trip to China.

Cuanang also reportedly advised Marcos to lose one to two pounds a week. He, however, refused to tell reporters who asked what the former first lady's current weight was.

"It is not right to ask a lady her weight," he said.

Ding Diaz, Marcos' spokesperson, told the INQUIRER that "there is nothing of concern (with regard to Marcos' health)."

"For a 78-year-old lady, she is fit. Everything is okay," Diaz said, adding that Marcos was examined "from the tips of her toes to the tips of her hair."

Diaz said even the doctors were surprised by the results of the tests and denied reports the former first lady was having heart problems.

"Her heart is healthy," he said.

As for the pain in her knees, Diaz said this could also be a result of Marcos' active lifestyle in the past.

"She was a working first lady for 20 years and was very active even when President Marcos was still president of the Senate," he said.

As for her three-day confinement at St. Luke's, Diaz said, "This is an annual and regular thing for us."

"She is healthier than most of us," he added.

Quitting far from Gonzalez's mind, says son

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ IS raring to get out of his hospital bed and return to the helm of the Department of Justice.

The secretary's son, Iloilo City Rep. Raul Gonzalez Jr., said that contrary to reports, his 76-year-old father had no plans of slowing down, much less of retiring from the government despite his recent kidney transplant.

"My father is impatient. He wants to go back to work right away," the younger Gonzalez told the INQUIRER yesterday in reaction to reports the secretary was considering retiring.

Gonzalez Sr. is one of the staunchest defenders of President Macapagal-Arroyo. As such, he has earned the enmity of those opposed to her, mainly politicians and militants.

"When the secretary goes back to work, the deepest and darkest desires of those who want him to leave the government will again be [put] in limbo," Gonzalez Jr. said.

Gonzalez Jr. said that what might have made people think his father was retiring were remarks he made earlier that were taken out of context.

The congressman said that what he had told a TV news crew was that if they had their way, he and his three siblings would rather that their father retire following his surgery.

"If you take away certain parts of the interview and just focus on something I said, the context in which I said it would be lost. That's what happened," Gonzalez Jr. said.

"News reports like that make my father more impatient and want to go back to work sooner," Gonzalez Jr. said.

The justice secretary's eldest child said they would know in 10 days whether or not his father's body had accepted the kidney that was donated by his driver, 50-year-old Felicito Gunay. *Norman Bordadora*

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COA asks 6 Manila dads to return allowances

‘No legal basis for getting ₱1.6M each’

By Allison W. Lopez

SIX MANILA COUNCILORS HAVE YET TO RETURN nearly P10 million to the city government’s coffers despite the Commission on Audit’s finding that there was “no legal basis” for them to receive a “monetary reward” for serving for three consecutive terms.

The six were identified as incumbent Councilors Luciano “Lou” Veloso, Jocelyn Dawis-Asuncion, Marlon Lacson and Monina “Pipay” Silva who received the money on behalf of her late husband, former Councilor Hilarion “Pipoy” Silva. The other two were former councilors Abraham Cabochan and Julio Logarta Jr. All six served in the city council for three consecutive terms from 1995 to 2004.

Based on documents obtained by the INQUIRER, the six each received over P1.6 million (out of a total amount of P3 million each) as “initial payment” after they qualified for the Exemplary Public Service Award (Epsa) in 2005.

The Epsa was created by the Manila City Council through Ordinance No. 8040, enacted on Dec. 7, 2000, which authorized “the conferment of an exemplary public service award on elective local officials of Manila who have been elected for three consecutive terms in the same position.”

The ordinance, whose principal author was Lacson, covered the mayor, vice mayor and councilors and stipulated that qualified officials would receive “a plaque of appreciation, retirement and gratuity pay remuneration equivalent to the actual time served in the position.”

After the release of the money, however, then supervising city auditor Gabriel Espina said a “verification of the (above) payment showed that the grant of (a) monetary reward to former elective officials in the form of retirement and gratuity pay was approved and authorized by the city council without legal basis.”

Espina’s comment was in an audit observation memorandum (AOM) he issued in 2005, a copy of which was received by the INQUIRER.

According to him, the remuneration was “not among the compensation and benefits due to elective local officials enumerated under … the Local Government Code of 1991.”

Eduardo de Gracia, a human resources management officer at City Hall, told the INQUIRER that a city councilor is entitled to the following benefits every month: P23,422 in basic salary plus P10,000 representation allowance; P1,500 additional compensation and P500 personal emergency relief allowance. He added that city councilors do not receive retirement benefits.

Based on Espina’s AOM, the COA legal and adjudication office, through COA Director IV Elizabeth Zosa, issued a notice of disallowance on May 24, 2006 ordering the six councilors to return the P1.6 million each they had received.

Zosa said that the giving out of a monetary reward “likewise contravenes Article 170 of Republic Act 7160, which provides that no elective or appointive local official shall receive additional, double or indirect compensation unless specifically authorized by law.”

Despite her order, a certification made by city accountant Ma. Lourdes Manlulu last week said that none of the six councilors has complied with the COA directive. Instead, they filed at the City Auditor’s Office “a motion to lift the notice of disallowance.”

COA/A18

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1 killed, 5 hurt in P’ñaque mishap

A WOMAN IDENTIFIED only as “Jenny” was killed while five other people were injured when the van they were riding in overturned in Parañaque City yesterday morning.

“Jenny” was declared dead on arrival at the Ospital ng Maynila while another woman, Annie Rose Divinagracia, had to have her right arm amputated.

Four others were rushed to the same hospital for cuts and bruises. They were identified as Harry Jumaun, 20; Analyn Majadas, 24; Jeian Majadas, 1 and Charlemaigne Lebenesia, 24.

Northbound

Investigator PO3 Alexander Macarunay said the six were on board a Manila-bound Mitsubishi L-300 van (NYW 317) which was traveling on the Coastal Road’s northbound lane yesterday when the driver, Gerald Majadas, 22, lost control of the vehicle.

The van veered to the right side of the road and hit the steel railings before it turned upside down.

Macarunay said “Jenny” died on the spot. The van’s driver, meanwhile, was taken into police custody. *Julie M. Aurelio*

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By Tina G. Santos

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UP Diliman campus blooms with 'justice' posters

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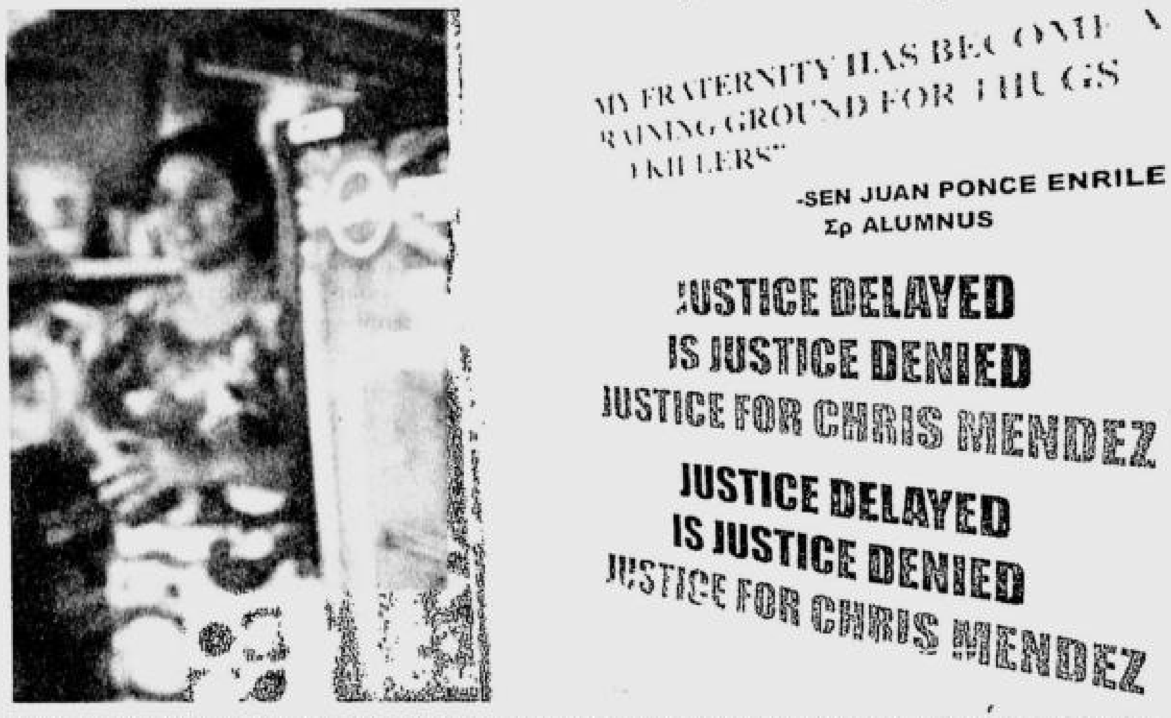

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Of inefficiency and sincerity

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

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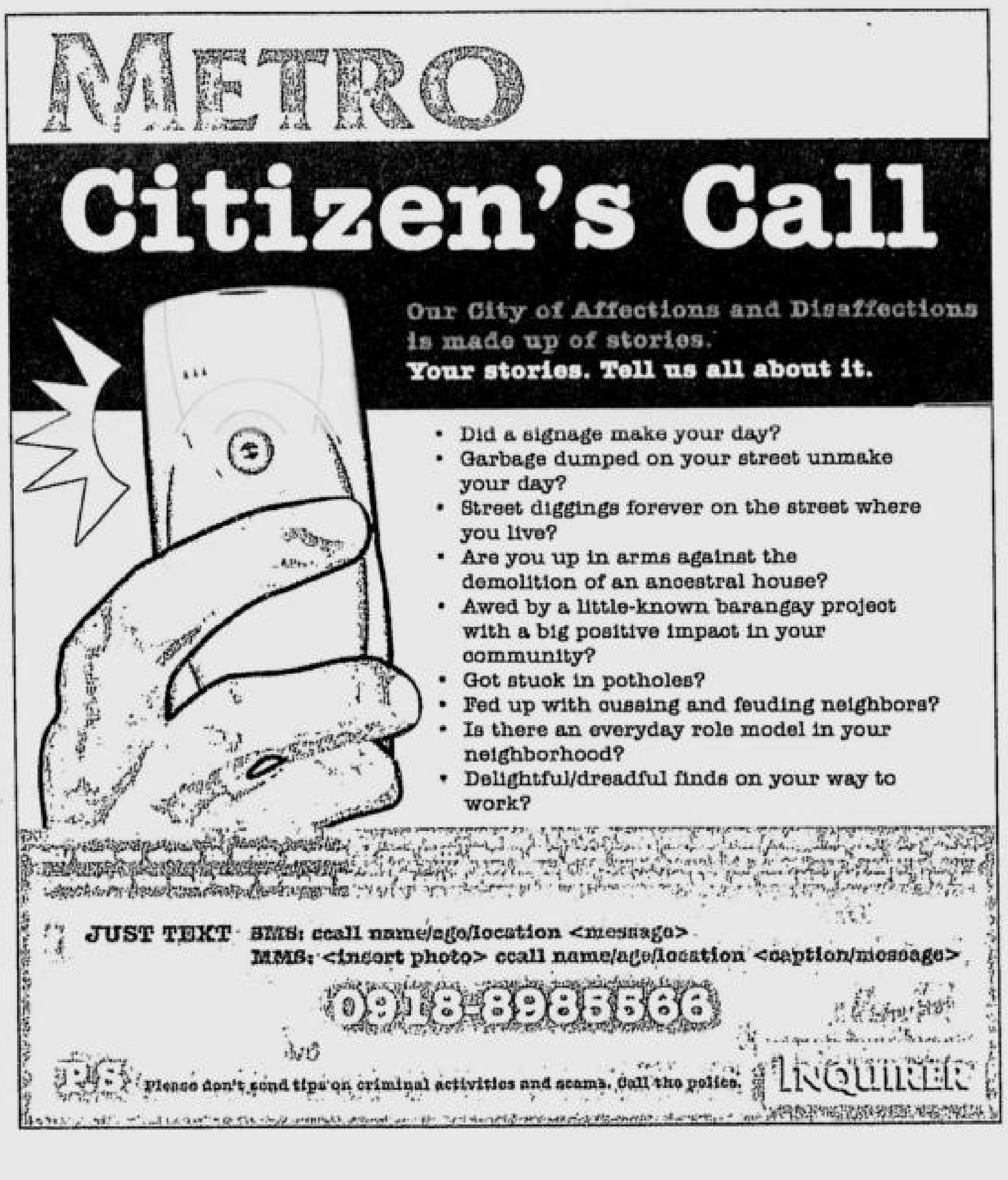

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- Got stuck in potholes?
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- Is there an everyday role model in your neighborhood?
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INQUIRER

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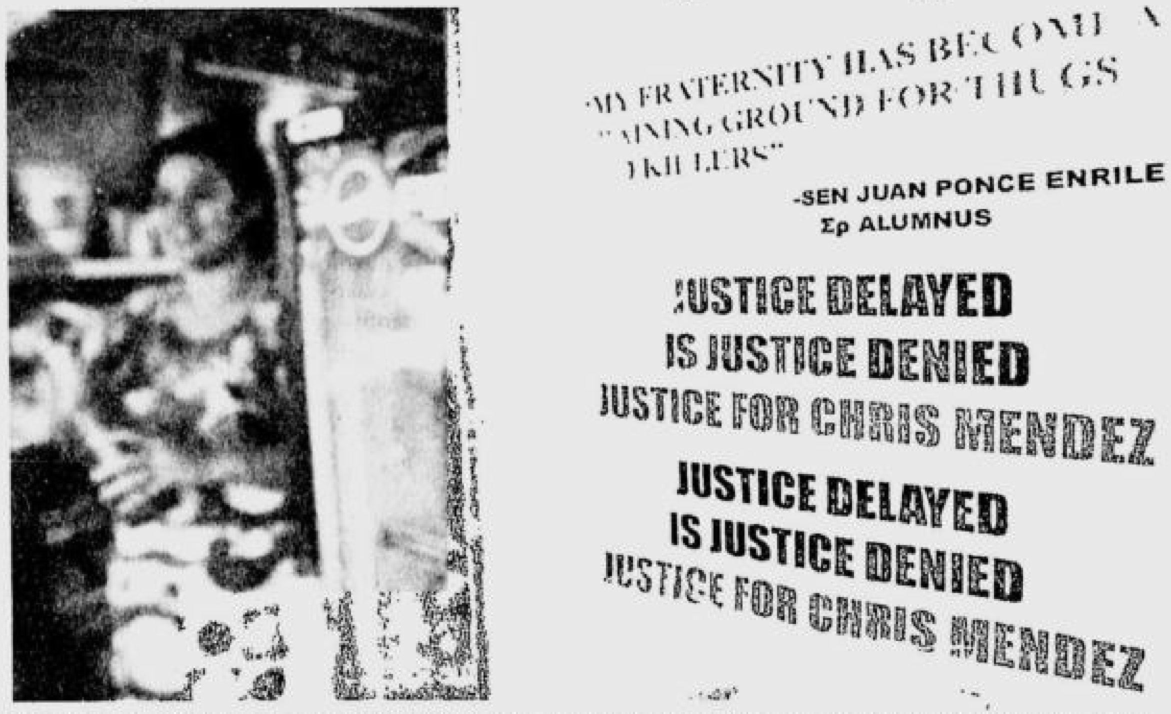

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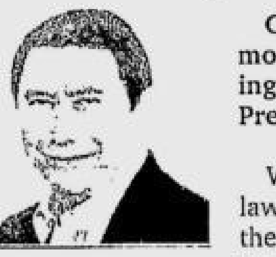

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INQUIRER

O.J. held without bail in Vegas armed robbery

O.J. SIMPSON is escorted from Las Vegas Metropolitan Police offices as he is taken to the Clark County Detention Center in Las Vegas, Nevada, on Sept. 16. REUTERS

LAS VEGAS—FORMER FOOTBALL star O.J. Simpson, who was acquitted in 1995 of murdering his ex-wife, was arrested and held without bail on Sunday in connection with a suspected armed robbery in a Las Vegas hotel room last week.

Simpson, 60, was taken into custody at the Palms hotel just off the Las Vegas strip on Sunday morning without incident and booked on suspicion of armed robbery, assault with a deadly weapon, conspiracy and burglary, Las Vegas police said. If convicted on all charges, Simpson could face some three decades in behind bars.

Simpson will be held without bail pending a court hearing on Thursday, Sgt. John Loretto said.

Las Vegas police on Saturday night arrested another man they believe was with the former star athlete during the suspected theft of Simpson-related sports souvenirs and other items and said they were searching for four others.

They also said they seized two handguns they believe are related to the Thursday night incident, which was reported by a sports memorabilia dealer as an armed robbery in his room at the Palace Station Hotel & Casino.

When asked if police believed Simpson was wielding a gun, Las Vegas Metro Police Lt. Clint Nichols told reporters, "We don't have any info that would lead us to believe he was armed."

Representatives for the Palms and Simpson's attorney did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Orenthal James, or O.J., Simpson, who parlayed his fame as an athlete into a career in movies and television before the murder trial—one of the most sensational in US history—ended his career in Hollywood, previously told police and the media he did nothing wrong in Las Vegas.

"I'm not walking around feeling sad or anything. I've done nothing wrong," he said in an interview published in the Los Angeles Times on Sunday.

Simpson told the paper that "golfing buddies and some of their friends" accompanied him to a meeting at the Palace Station Hotel & Casino to help him retrieve sports memorabilia, personal photos and other items he said had been stolen by a former sports agent.

Simpson who lives in Miami, Florida, said an auctioneer set up the meeting with the sellers. He said the men in his party were unarmed.

"I'm O.J. Simpson. How am I going to think that I'm going to rob somebody and get away with it?" he said. "You've got to understand, this ain't somebody going to steal somebody's drugs or something like that. This is somebody going to get his private (belongings) back. That's it. That's not robbery."

After he was acquitted in the murders of his former wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman, a civil court jury found Simpson responsible for the deaths and ordered him to pay $33.5 million in damages to their families.

The former National Football League star, nicknamed "The Juice" during his playing days, has had other minor brushes with police since 1995.

Simpson's latest legal flap comes as Simpson's book "If I Did It," which includes a hypothetical account of his ex-wife's murder, was hitting store shelves. The book is No. 2 on Amazon.com's bestseller list. *Reuters*

Terrorism case confirms Denmark is a target

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK—AFTER three terrorism cases in less than two years, including an alleged bombing plot broken up this month, intelligence officials say Denmark is on the front line in the battle against Islamic terrorism in Europe.

"Even though we've prevented one terrorist attack, we know that there are still people in Denmark and abroad that have the capacity, the will and the ability to carry out terrorist attacks in Denmark," Jakob Scharf, the head of Danish intelligence, said.

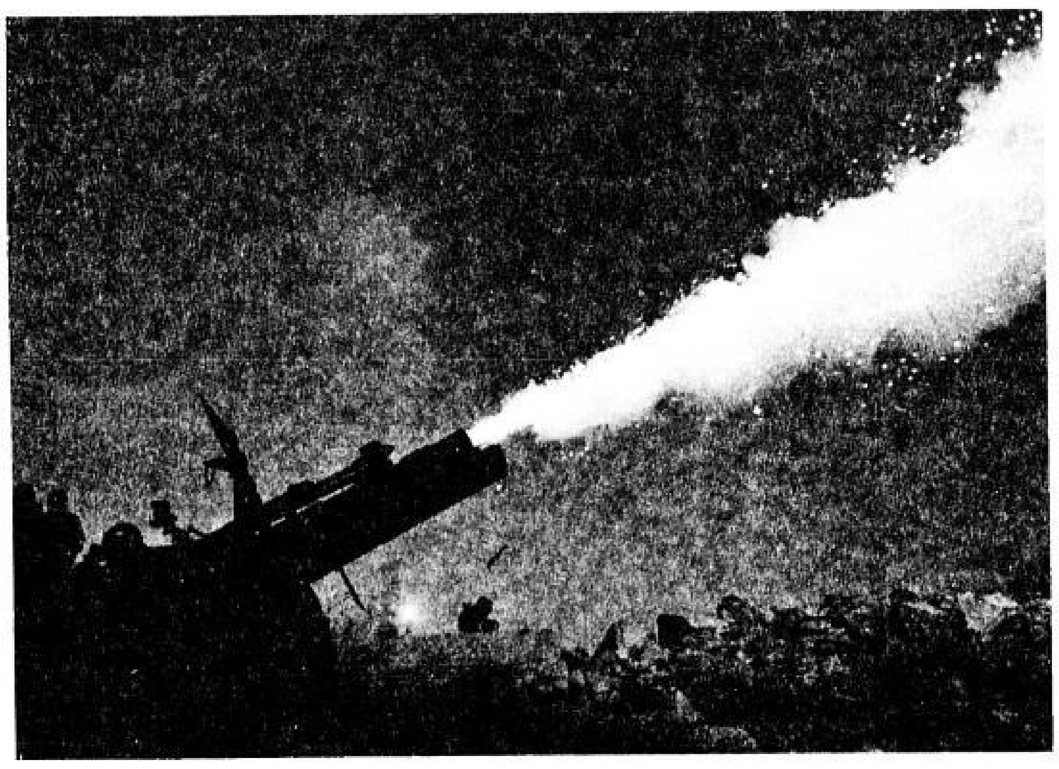
He was referring to raids on Sept. 4 that resulted in the arrests of eight men; two are still in custody on terrorism charges and are accused of planning a bombing attack.

Denmark illustrates the powerful interplay between foreign agitation and domestic discontent. The country became a target of foreign Islamist terrorist groups two years ago after a newspaper here published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. At home, the children of Muslim immigrants complain of job discrimination and integration problems, feeding the disenchantment of the small but growing Muslim population.

Intelligence officials here and in Washington said that at least one suspect in the Danish group had direct ties to al-Qaida figures.

"What's coming from this is that they are now able to give military and terrorist training and able to plan and steer specific operations in Europe," Scharf said. "Al-Qaida is back."

Scharf drew a clear distinction between loosely affiliated groups drawing inspiration from al-Qaida's ideology and specific control of plans for attack. He put the new Danish plot in the second category. *NYT*



A CANNON fires as part of the ceremonial shot that ends Muslim's daily fast during the Ramadan holiday outside Jerusalem's Old City on Sept. 16.. A peaceful boom, set off by a Muslim and a Jew, echoed through Jerusalem's Old City Sunday night, ending the daily fast during the Muslim Ramadan holy month. AP

Undercover Islamic team in Malaysia looking for Muslims flouting Ramadan

KUALA LUMPUR—AN UNDERCOVER Islamic team in Malaysia is on the lookout for Muslims who violate Ramadan by eating, drinking or smoking during the daytime.

Authorities in Kota Baru, state capital of Kelantan, told the New Straits Times that plainclothes officers would spy on food outlets and hand out fines of 20 ringgit ($6) to those caught cheating during the fasting month.

During Ramadan, which began last week, observant Muslims abstain from eating, smoking and sex from dawn to dusk.

"This is the first time the council is taking this action as we have received numerous complaints about those who eat openly during the fasting period," city council public relations director Azman Mohd Daham said.

Muslim food outlets will be slapped with 500 ringgit ($144) fines for violating a directive to remain closed until 3 p.m., he said.

Kelantan is the only Malaysian state governed by the fundamentalist Islamic opposition party, PAS.

Last year it triggered a furor by introducing fines for women who work in shops and restaurants wearing revealing clothes such as miniskirts or see-through blouses. *AFP*

Swedish PM, media rally behind journalists who got death threats

STOCKHOLM—SWEDEN'S PRIME minister on Sunday appealed for calm following an al-Qaida death warrant on two journalists for a cartoon portraying the Prophet Muhammad as a dog and threats to attack top Swedish firms.

Cartoonist Lars Vilks said he could die any time as he was getting old after al-Qaida extremists in Iraq offered up to $150,000 to anyone who slit his throat and also to kill journalist Ulf Johansson for publishing the caricature.

"We must not give in," Vilks was quoted as saying in the Dagens Nyheter daily which republished the cartoon in small format on Sunday.

Sweden's Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt on Sunday sought to defuse tensions and urged "reflection" after talks with local Islamic leaders.

"We are appealing for calm, we are appealing for reflection, we reject these calls to violence and we reject any attempts to aggravate the situation," the conservative leader said.

He underscored Sweden's commitment to freedom of speech and expression—echoing the local media on Sunday which solidly backed the two embattled journalists.

A group calling itself the Islamic State of Iraq, otherwise known as al-Qaida in Iraq, also put $50,000 on the head of Johansson, editor in chief of the Nerikes Allehanda newspaper which published the caricature.

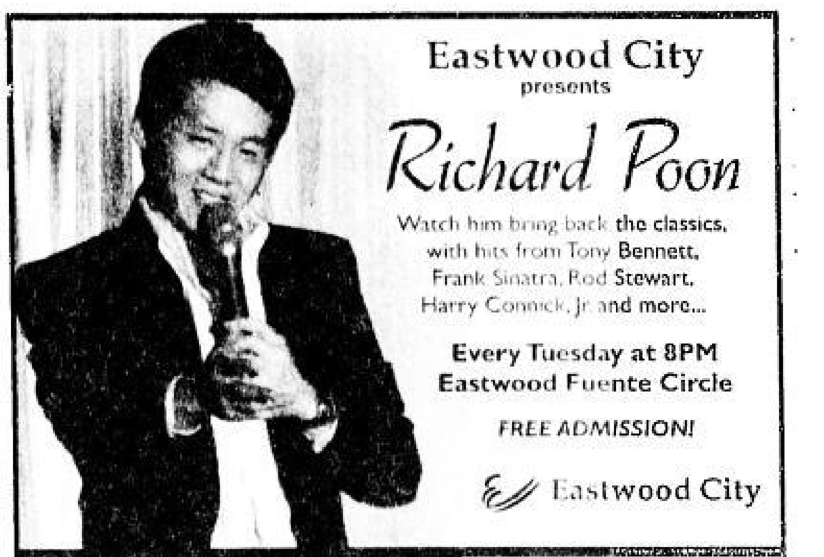
The group has threatened to strike at top Swedish firms such as telecom major Ericsson, truckmaker Scania, car firm Volvo, furniture company Ikea and Electrolux if the country's "crusaders" did not offer an apology.

Swedish media condemned the threats, issued through the Internet on Saturday in the form of a statement in the name of the group's purported leader, Sheikh Abu Omar al-Baghdadi.

"We live in a country where freedom of expression is not dictated by fundamentalists, nor by governments," wrote Dagens Nyheter chief editor Thorbjoern Larsson in an editorial.

"Dagens Nyheter has already published the cartoon. To me, publishing it was the obvious thing to do."

The cartoon featuring the Prophet Muhammad's head on a dog's body was originally published in Nerikes Allehanda on Aug. 18 and immediately provoked protests by Muslims in the western town of Oerebro, where the paper is based. *AFP*



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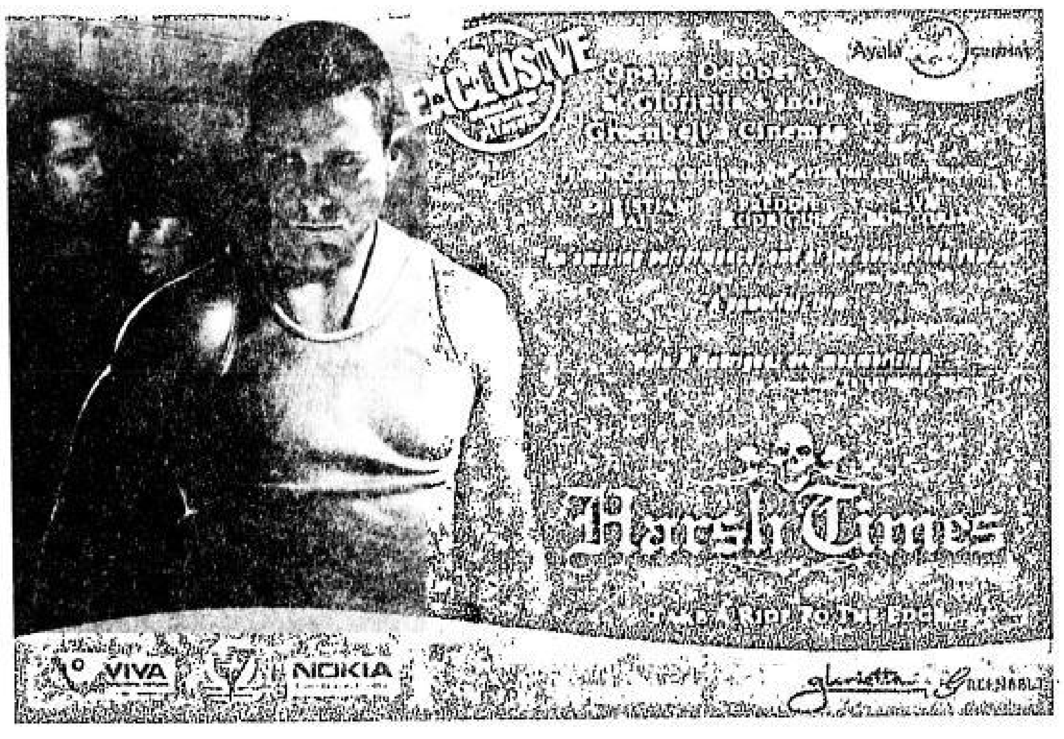

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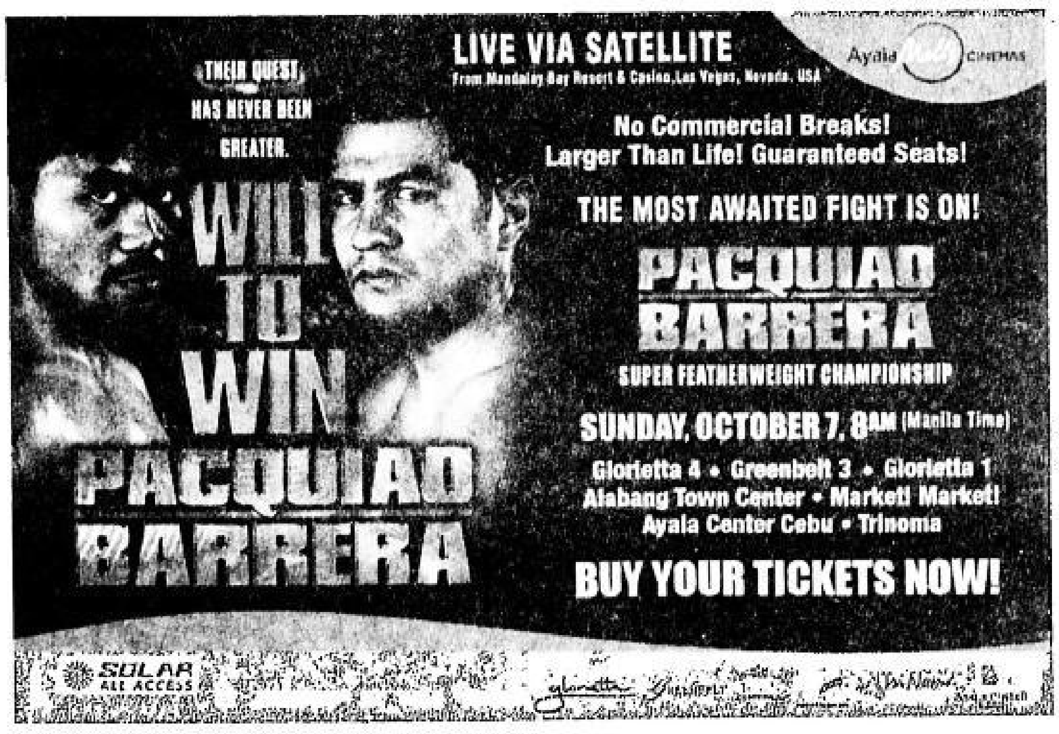

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Thai plane crash kills 89; 41 survive

A THAI rescuer looks through the wreckage of a crashed One-Two-Go Airlines plane on the side of a runway in Phuket, Thailand, on Sept. 17. The plane carrying 123 passengers and a seven-man crew from Bangkok crashed on the resort island of Phuket, killing at least 89 people, including 55 foreigners, an airline official said. AP

PHUKET, THAILAND—SUCHEEP PANETUNG WEPT AS she stood in an auditorium at Phuket airport, staring at the dozens of bodies wrapped in white plastic laid out nearby.

She wondered which corpse was that of a work colleague which she would have to retrieve and deliver to distraught relatives in the Thai capital Bangkok.

"I hope that I can collect his body today," she said through tears, as she and other friends and relatives of people aboard a Thai airliner that crashed on this holiday island got to grips with the task of identifying the dead.

"But then I don't know what to do with it. I have to wait for his family to arrive."

The MD-83 jet carrying 123 passengers and seven crew crashed on landing in driving rain here Sunday, breaking in two and slamming in flames into a wooded embankment.

Authorities said 89 people were killed, including 55 foreigners, while the other 41 survived and were being treated.

On Monday, overwhelmed emergency workers who had laid out the bodies in the airport auditorium late Sunday slowly placed them into coffins and loaded them onto trucks.

Families and forensic workers stood under the harsh glare of TV lights, as the rain continued to pour down.

Elsewhere, survivors lay in hospital beds around the island, wondering why they were saved and grieving for those who failed to escape from the blazing wreckage of the One-Two-Go jet.

"Why was I lucky? Because I was wearing this Buddhist amulet," Parinyawich Chusaeng, who escaped with only cuts and minors burns, explained.

Canadian tourist Millie Furlong, 23, said she escaped after the man sitting behind her and boyfriend kicked open an emergency exit.

"You don't have time to think or be scared or anything. The flames came so quick, and there was smoke so you couldn't see anything. It was just smoke," she said.

She made it out with only minor injuries but her boyfriend Chatri Suksawas, 26, suffered smoke inhalation because he stayed behind to help others escape the inferno.

Hospitals filled with friends and relatives waiting for news on survivors who underwent surgery during the night.

"He's alive and that's good to start with. But he's been burned and broken his arm," said Sten Jenson, whose Australian business partner Robert Borland managed to escape.

Emergency workers fought to clear debris from the runway, leaving hundreds of stranded passengers inside the terminal building waiting for news on when they might be able to leave.

Dozens boarded buses headed to the airport in the neighboring province of Krabi, where they hoped to catch flights to Bangkok, but many chose to wait it out instead, sitting on piles of luggage around the terminal.

Some One-Two-Go passengers tried to get seats on other airlines.

"I'm too scared to fly with One-Two-Go," said Orawan Kaenkaew, who was with four other women trying to get to Bangkok.

VIRTUALLY UNSCATHED: Canadian Millie Furlong, 23. REUTERS

"We're going to try to get to other airports in Surat Thani or Hat Yai and fly back from there."

Underneath signs flashing "Delayed" for every flight, honeymooners Pavlos and Sarah Christoforou from Cyprus said they were trying to make the most of their time stuck on Phuket.

"We have to catch a connecting flight in Bangkok to Dubai, and then to Nicosia, but now we don't know when we will be leaving," Sarah Christoforou said, sitting on their luggage.

"But the airline paid for us to stay at a country club last night, so we spent the evening at the spa." *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Fewer sodas in US schools

WASHINGTON—US school vending machines are stocked with fewer high-calorie soft drinks today because some states have banned the sale of sodas on campus and the beverage industry is phasing in healthier drinks, according to an industry report. The findings being released Monday are in the industry's first report card since agreeing in May 2006 to pull nondiet soft drinks from the vast majority of public and private schools over the next three years. Nondiet soda accounted for 32 percent of the drinks for sale at schools during the 2006-07 school year. In 2004, it was 47 percent. ***AP***

After 3-day Internet binge, Chinese dies

BEIJING—A Chinese man dropped dead after playing Internet games for three consecutive days, state media said on Monday as China seeks to wean Internet addicts offline. The man from the southern boomtown of Guangzhou, aged about 30, died on Saturday after being rushed to the hospital from the Internet café, local authorities were quoted by the Beijing News as saying. "Police have ruled out the possibility of suicide," the newspaper said, adding that exhaustion was the most likely cause of death. It did not say what game he was playing. ***Reuters***

Police dump bodies of mob victims in river

NEW DELHI—Police in India threw the bodies of 10 men beaten to death by villagers on suspicion of robbery into a river instead of cremating them, allegedly to save money, reports said Monday. Police in the crime-racked eastern state of Bihar had been instructed to cremate the bodies after authorities decided against handing over the victims to their relatives on grounds of law and order, The Hindu newspaper reported. Eight bodies were found floating in the Ganges river, where dogs and vultures were feeding on them, the report said. The top administrative official of Vaishali district, where the lynching took place, and a senior police official were transferred Sunday over the disposal of bodies. ***AFP***

World should brace for possible war over Iran —France

PARIS—THE WORLD SHOULD brace for a possible war over the Iranian nuclear crisis but seeking a solution through talks should take priority, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said on Sunday.

"We have to prepare for the worst, and the worst is war," he said in an interview broadcast on French television and radio.

"We must negotiate right to the end" with Iran, he said, but underlined that if Tehran possessed an atomic weapon, it would represent "a real danger for the whole world."

Calling the nuclear standoff "the greatest crisis" of present times, the minister said: "We will not accept that the bomb is manufactured," and hinted that military plans were on the way.

"We are trying to put in place plans which are the privilege of chiefs of staff and that is not for tomorrow," he said but stressed that although any attack on Iran was far from taking place, "It is normal for us to plan" for any eventuality.

In Washington, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates took a more muted approach on Sunday.

"I will tell you that I think the administration believes at this point that continuing to try and deal with the Iranian threat ... through diplomatic and economic means is by far the preferable approach," he said.

Kouchner, meanwhile, said France wanted the European Union to prepare sanctions against Iran, outside the ambit of the UN Security Council, to force Tehran to forsake its nuclear ambitions.

"We have decided that while negotiations are continuing ... to prepare eventual sanctions outside the ambit of UN sanctions. Our good friends, the Germans, suggested that," he said.

The foreign minister also said leading French companies such as Total and Gaz de France had been urged not to undertake new work or contracts in Iran.

Tehran vehemently denies Western allegations it is seeking an atomic weapon, saying its nuclear drive is aimed at providing electricity for a growing population whose fossil fuels will one day run out.

The five permanent Security Council members—Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States—plus Germany are due to meet to discuss a new draft UN resolution on sanctions against Iran on Sept. 21 in Washington.

"I do not fear revealing this secret. I think the president wants this as well," he said. *AFP*

Mammoth manure, prehistoric goo may speed warming

DUVANNY YAR, RUSSIA—Sergei Zimov bends down, picks up a handful of treacly mud and holds it up to his nose. It smells like a cow pat, but he knows better.

"It smells like mammoth dung," he says.

This is more than just another symptom of global warming.

For millennia, layers of animal waste and other organic matter left behind by the creatures that used to roam the Arctic tundra have been sealed inside the frozen permafrost. Now, climate change is thawing the permafrost and lifting this prehistoric ooze from suspended animation.

But Zimov, a scientist who for almost 30 years has studied climate change in Russia's Arctic, believes that as this organic matter becomes exposed to the air it will accelerate global warming faster than even some of the most pessimistic forecasts.

"This will lead to a type of global warming which will be impossible to stop," he said.

When the organic matter left behind by mammoths and other wildlife is exposed to the air by the thawing permafrost, his theory runs, microbes that have been dormant for thousands of years spring back into action.

As a by-product they emit carbon dioxide and—even more damaging in terms of its impact on the climate—methane gas.

According to Zimov, the microbes are going to start emitting these gases in enormous quantities.

Here in Yakutia, a region in the north-eastern corner of Siberia, the belt of permafrost containing the mammoth-era soil covers an area roughly the size of France and Germany combined.

There is even more of it elsewhere in Siberia.

"The deposits of organic matter in these soils are so gigantic that they dwarf global oil reserves," Zimov said.

US government statistics show mankind emits about seven billion tons of carbon a year.

"Permafrost areas hold 500 billion tons of carbon, which can fast turn into greenhouse gases," Zimov said.

"If you don't stop emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere ... the Kyoto Protocol (an international pact aimed at reducing greenhouse emissions) will seem like childish prattle."

It might be easy to dismiss the 52-year-old as an alarmist crank. But his theory is grabbing attention in the scientific community.

"There's quite a bit of truth in it," Julian Murton of the International Permafrost Association, said.

"The methane and carbon dioxide levels will increase as a result of permafrost degradation." *Reuters*

Iraq's sectarian strife displaces both Sunnis and Shiites alike

BAGHDAD—IRAQIS HAVE CONtinued to flee their homes throughout the American troop increase, which began early this year, and despite assurances that it is becoming safe to return, uncrossable lines have been left in Iraqi minds and neighborhoods.

Schools, hospitals and municipal buildings are quickly losing their diversity.

Part of the sensitivity comes from trauma inflicted by Saddam Hussein's government.

The segregation is reshaping the structure of families: In Sharchiya, a mostly Shiite neighborhood in central Baghdad, only about five percent of the marriage contracts he registers are for mixed-sect couples, down from about 50 percent before the war, the judge said.

The patterns started to form in 2005, when militants began pushing Iraqis out of their houses.

In a survey of 200 displaced Shiite families living in Karbala, a southern city, researchers from Al Amal, an organization that assists the displaced, found that 60 percent were unable to take their furniture or belongings when they fled.

"I lost everything in one moment," said Rossel, the eldest daughter in the Muhammad family, who were displaced in December. "I don't know who I am now. I'm somebody different."

They are educated people, and they say they do not want revenge. But typical of those who are left from Iraq's reasonable middle, the Muhammads have been hardened toward others by violence, and they have been forced to feel their sectarian identity. *NYT*

Bush to nominate US judge vice Attorney General Gonzales

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT George W. Bush has settled on retired federal judge Michael Mukasey as his choice to replace outgoing Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, people familiar with the selection process said on Sunday.

The nomination of Mukasey, considered a law-and-order conservative and authority on national security issues, was expected on Monday, according to the sources, who asked not to be named.

A senior Republican aide said that background materials about the retired 66-year-old jurist were distributed to Senate Republican staffers, in preparation for Mukasey's anticipated Senate confirmation hearing.

The aide said Bush seemed to turn to Mukasey after Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid vowed last week to block another potential top nominee, former US Solicitor General Theodore Olson, as too partisan.

GONZALES wipes a away a tear during his farewell ceremony on Sept. 14. AFP

Democratic Sen. Charles Schumer of New York, who led the drive to force Gonzales out, said Mukasey has the potential to become a consensus nominee.

"While he is certainly conservative, Judge Mukasey seems to be the kind of nominee who would put rule of law first and show independence from the White House," Schumer said in a statement.

"For sure, we'd want to ascertain his approach on such important and sensitive issues as wiretapping and the appointment of US attorneys, but he's a lot better than some of the other names mentioned."

If confirmed by the Senate, Mukasey would replace Gonzales, who resigned last month, effective on Monday. Gonzales quit after months of Democratic and some Republican lawmakers challenged his truthfulness and ability to do his job as the chief US law enforcement officer. *Reuters*

SPORTS

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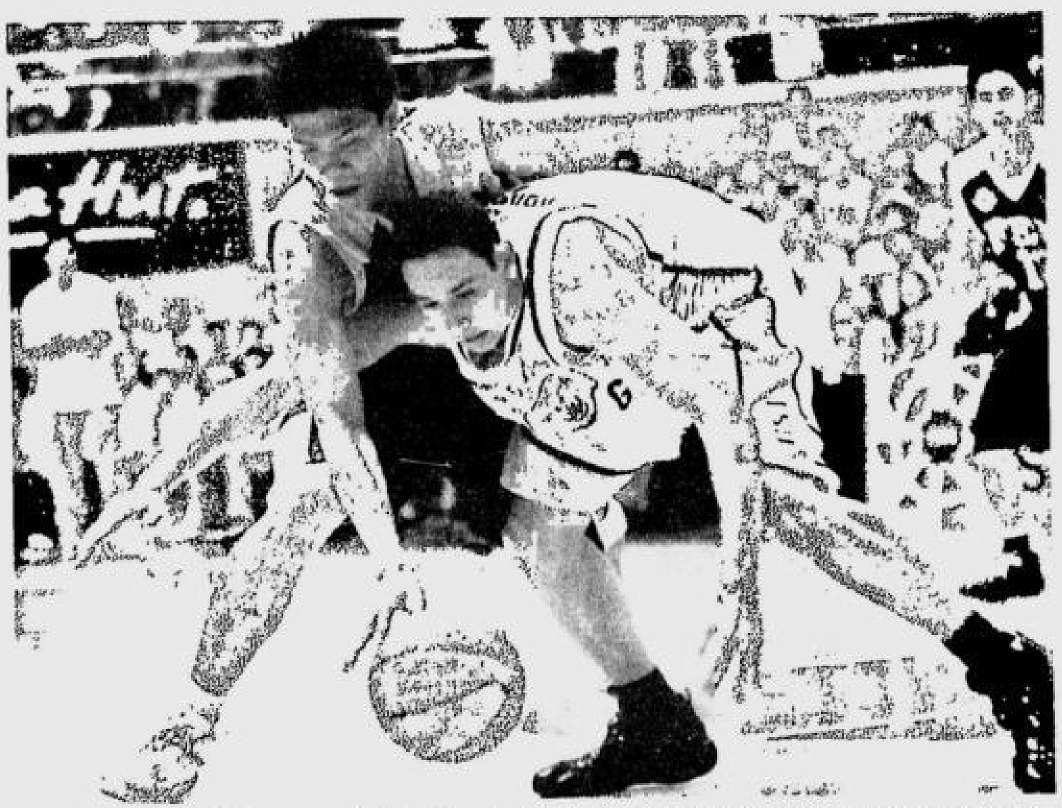
Fiery Paeng stamps class Down Under /A23

Tiger gobbles up field /A24



FAR Eastern's Reil Cervantes (left) swipes the ball away from UST mainstay Dylan Ababou in yesterday's playoff at the Araneta Coliseum. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Tigers show fangs at last

Maul Tams to grab No. 4 slot

By Mysong R. Castillo

PLAYING WITH THE DESIRE THAT IT didn't show twice before, the Santo Tomas Growling Tigers kept alive their dreams of a basketball championship repeat in the UAAP.

The Tigers broke away from the Far Eastern Tamaraws in a span that bridged the second and third periods yesterday for an 80-69 victory before a boisterous Big Dome crowd.

The win gave the Santo Tomas the No. 4 seeding in the semifinals

A varying defensive blanket thrown by the Tigers dumbfounded the Tamaraws, their erstwhile masters in two elimination-round games, as Santo Tomas put itself back in the very position it was in when it pulled off a surprise title run last year.

The Tigers were coming off a 73-84 defeat to the Tamaraws last Thursday.

And the Santo Tomas offense hummed on all cylinders, with top MVP candidate Jervy Cruz leading the way with 17 points and 14 rebounds and three others chipping in with 11 or more.

Crafty forward Reil Cervantez led the Tamaraws with 17 points.

"That's what this team is capable of playing," coach Pido Jarencio told the INQUIRER. "We didn't have that intensity when we lost (on Thursday).

"If we continue to play this way, I guess you can say that we are a very dangerous team."

Cruz scored 13 of his output in the first two periods and skipper Anthony Espiritu added five of his 12 and Dylan Ababou seven of his 11 in the second quarter as the Tigers overhauled a two-point first quarter deficit to zoom to a 39-25 halftime lead.

The UST defense—which was sometimes a man-to-man, a floating 2-3 zone and a halfcourt press—also held the Tamaraws to a season-low six points in the second quarter.

Up next for Santo Tomas is the loser of another playoff game today between Ateneo and La Salle. *(See related story on A22)*

Jarencio and his gutsy gang also qualified as the No. 4 seed last year, pulling out two victories over the top-seeded Warriors before nipping Ateneo, 2-1, in the best-of-three Finals.

The scores:

UST 80—Cruz 17, Espiritu 12, Mirza 11, Ababou 11, Cuan 8, Cortez 8, Taylor 7, Canlas 6, Dizon 0, Allera 0.

FEU 69—Cervantes 17, Baracael 15, Sanga 9, Ramos 8, Cawaling 8, Fernandez 4, Abaring 3, Adolfo 3, Cabagnot 2, Alisbo 0, Knuttel 0, Barroca 0.

Quarters: 17-19, 39-25, 63-43, 80-69

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Eagles, Archers dispute 2nd place, bonus today

IT TOOK NORMAN BLACK and the rest of his Ateneo squad a long time to come out of their locker room that fateful Saturday night, when they blew a golden chance to nail down the No. 2 slot in the UAAP basketball semifinals.

"The good thing about it is that we still have a shot at it, though the road to the Finals has suddenly become tougher," Black told sportswriters. "We just didn't come out to play tonight.

The National U Bulldogs downed the Eagles in overtime, 96-88, Saturday to send Ateneo into today's playoff with arch rival La Salle for the precious No. 2 position, which comes with a twice-to-beat bonus in the playoff for the second championship berth.

"I warned them that we only beat NU by one point (in the first round)," Black said. "I warned them to come and play (and they didn't). We paid the price and we have to do it the hard way."

GAME TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
3 p.m.—La Salle vs Ateneo

The hard way means Ateneo getting past La Salle a third time this season in their 3 p.m. duel today at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

National's upset win sent the Eagles into a tie with the Archers for the second-best record behind the University of the East Warriors, who went straight to the Finals after a 14-0 sweep of the elims.

Confidence boost

Ateneo swept both its elimination-round matches with the Archers, although league observers say the two victories were not convincing enough to give the Eagles an overwhelming confidence boost today.

The loser can still get back into contention but it has to beat Santo Tomas in a knockout duel Thursday to earn another crack at the No. 2 slot.

The Archers go into the match also smarting from an 84-92 overtime loss to the Warriors last Thursday. *Musong R. Castillo*

LA SALLE'S JV Casio loses possession under pressure from Ateneo's Jai Reyes (left) and Rabeh Al-Hussaini in their first meeting. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

FLYING FINISH: Members of the victorious UP Pep Squad bring the house down with a powerful routine in Sunday's Samsung Cheer Competition. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Cheers to a hardy breed of athletes

By Musong R. Castillo

DRESSED IN THEIR SCHOOL COLORS, THESE "athletes" huddle together right before "game time," punctuating each of these shows of unity with their own thunderous battle cries.

And then they break up the huddle, step onto the Araneta Coliseum hardwood and get ready to perform before a full-packed crowd that can rival even the ones a crucial Ateneo-La Salle ballgame reels in.

The UAAP basketball finals?

Think again.

For one day in the busy UAAP season, the hardwood is covered in tarpaulin, the goal posts are removed and basketball players are nowhere to be seen. Instead, a different breed of athletes take the court—cheerdancers they are called—for that annual spectacle called the UAAP cheering competition.

A huge crowd filled the Big Dome to the rafters on Sunday, cheering for their respective pep squads in what has become an institutionalized event. Never mind the standings of their respective schools in the current basketball season.

"We spent no less than four months preparing for this," said one La Salle cheerdancer, who was so pumped up during final rehearsal in the hallway he forgot to give his name.

His excitement may have ended up misplaced as even the results nearly turned out to be routine. Undone perhaps by a slight glitch to open their program, the University of Santo Tomas Salinggawi Dance Troupe lost the crown they had worn for five straight years to the UP Pep Squad, which pipped UST, 92.66-92.16, to win the title.

It was a dramatic victory for UP, which used to challenge UST for this annual crown in the early years of the competition.

But the victories are not the only one celebrated by this tournament. UP's victory underscored one thing: the school's men's basketball team languished in the cellar all season long and wound up with a 0-14 card. By that alone, its pep squad should have nothing to cheer about.

No one would've ever noticed UP's basketball record with the way its cheerdancers' performed.

School officials treat the Cheering Competition with the same zest as they do their athletic teams. Their pep squads also have coaches, utility personnel and trainers for injuries.

The only difference nowadays between the school's basketball player and cheerdancer is in popularity, and where they are during UAAP ballgames—the player is on the court and the cheerdancer in the stands.

Cheerdancers also enjoy scholarships like the ballplayer, another road for a student to take if he wants to earn a degree from a reputable school.

The electricity inside the Big Dome was so thick you couldn't slice through it with a knife. Each pep squad was greeted with raucous ovation when it stepped onto the floor.

Lines of students who queued at the entrances stretched to the streets and tickets sold like hotcakes. Scalpers enjoyed a heyday. The P250 patron seat sold for as high as P3,000 and the P100 Upper A ticket went for P500.

"This event definitely defines the UAAP," said Santo Tomas' Felicitas Francisco, the secretary-treasurer of the 70th UAAP. "Winning this event is like winning a sports event per se."

Why the PNG should be revived

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

I AGREE WITH PSC CHAIR WILLIAM "Butch" Ramirez who broached the idea of reviving the mothballed Philippine National Games.

The integrated, Olympic-style, multi-sports national competition caters to and harnesses the vast potentials of all athletes in the community.

"If you ask me, I think the PNG should be revived," Ramirez told INQUIRER's June Navarro in a recent in terview.

A centerpiece of the government's physical fitness and sports development program, the PNG was last held in 1977 in Cebu City. The only other PNG meets were held in 1994 and 1996.

The PNG was envisioned to promote sports activities at the grassroots level and spur the development of elite athletes for international competitions under the aegis of the Philippine Sports Commission.

But sadly, the PNG did not produce heroes in the mold of Lydia de Vega, Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco and Eugene Torre.

President Fidel V. Ramos launched the PNG in 1994. It was organized by the PSC through the initiative and vision of then commissioner Celso Dayrit. However, changes in the PSC leadership led to its untimely demise.

Held once every two years, the PNG welcomed all eligible Filipino athletes. According to Dayrit, the PNG is not like the Palarong Pambansa and other school-based competitions, which are only for students, or the Armed Forces of the Philippines "Little Olympics," which are only for the military.

* * *

The PNG includes all sports that Filipinos play in the Southeast Asian Games, the Asiad and in the Olympics. It is also designed for "province-based" representations where athletes represent their province or city, unlike that of the Palarong Pambansa where athletes represent a geographical region.

Compared to other major sporting events, the PNG is bigger and wider in scope and operates as the country's Olympic-style games since mostly Olympic events are in its calendar.

Everybody is given the chance to participate, said Dayrit in his book "The Olympic Movement in the Philippines."

Even an aspiring athlete from the countryside is given the same opportunity to compete against seasoned athletes. The level of competition is relatively moderate to high. All participants are encouraged to train harder and aim higher in keeping with the Olympic motto of Citius, Altius, Fortius (Faster, Higher, Stronger).

The PNG is similar to the national games of China, host of next year's Olympics, South Korea and Indonesia, to name a few.

For his part, Ramirez said he is supporting Executive Order 651 which called for the strengthening of the PSC's grassroots development program by implementing the instructions of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The PSC chair added that he is directing the newly created Philippine Sports Institute to serve as lead organization in implementing EO 651. He said the PSC is creating a task force which he will chair with a representative from the Philippine Olympic Committee acting as co-chair.

* * *

MISCELLANY. I hope I'm wrong, but is it true that there is trouble brewing in the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines? How come the BSCP is not sending the very best team to the SEA Games in December in Bangkok? …Belated birthday greetings to former Rep. Concoy Chavez, a longtime and esteemed friend from way, way back. Looking fit and trim, Concoy celebrated his 75th birth anniversary at his sprawling Ayala Alabang homes with relatives, golf buddies and pals, including POC president Peping Cojuangco, former Rep. Rudy Albano, Gus Villanueva, editor-in-chief of the Journal Group of publications; and this corner and his wife.

SPORTSWATCH

Artadi now a Gin King after feud with P'foods coaches

PAUL ARTADI, THE ONCE PROMISING point guard out of the University of the East, yesterday found his way to Barangay Ginebra from Purefoods after a deal that also involved Air21 and two more players.

The 5-foot-9 former first round selection, who had a falling out with the Purefoods coaching staff, was dealt away for practically nothing in exchange.

Ginebra coach Jong Uichico said they gave up reliable swingman Jec Chia and Paolo Hubalde to the Express, who in turn got Artadi and dealt him to the Gin Kings.

The Commissioner's Office was still unaware of the trade and Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio and team manager Alvin Patrimonio would not return calls.

Ginebra now has four crack guards in its roster, counting starting quarterback Jay-Jay Helterbrand, former MVP Johnny Abarrientos and rookie Macky Escalona.

Meanwhile, San Miguel got 27 points from Danny Ildefonso and 20 from Danny Seigle in a 127-116 rout of Coca-Cola in a pre-season game at the Marikina Sports Complex last night. *Musong R. Castillo*

Football body suspends NCRFA over court case

THE PHILIPPINE FOOTBALL FEDERATION suspended the National Capital Region Football Association yesterday for suing the PFF and its officials in violation of association and Fifa (Federation Internationale de Football Association) rules.

The suspension prevented the NCRFA from participating in the PFF extraordinary congress which was held immediately after the board of governors meeting where the decision to sack the NCRFA was approved.

The PFF sanction, which will last until the next board meeting on Nov. 24, emanated from a Fifa directive to the PFF to take disciplinary action against the NCRFA for infringement of its by-laws in seeking court action against the association.

Dimakiling, Engay capture Shell Davao chess plums

UNIVERSITY OF MINDANAO MAINSTAY Chito Dimakiling II needed just a draw with Jerwell Andoy in the final round to rule the juniors division of the Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships 2007 Mindanao leg at SM City Davao on Sunday.

In kiddies play, Danilo Engay Jr. scored 2.5 points in the last three rounds, including a final-round victory over Alvin Acos to bag the crown with 6.5 points.

LSGH cage camp slated

THE SECOND MODULE OF THE LA SALLE Green Hills Basketball Camp begins on Sept. 22 at the school campus gym.

Basketball-loving kids seven to 17 years old can join the camp, which offers three courses consisting of eight sessions each and held on Saturdays from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the FMAC in La Salle Green Hills.

Registration fee is P2300 inclusive of a reversible jersey. For inquiries, call 722-7717 (direct) or 721-2000 local 718.

Student-friendly schedules

THE COACH E BASKETBALL SCHOOL has announced its student-friendly schedules starting early next month in several Metro Manila and provincial venues.

International Basketball Academy president Xavy Nunag said enrollment inquiries will be entertained during office hours at 631-1195 (telefax) and 0921-7562639.

Coach E classes are scheduled on Oct. 16 (San Beda-Alabang), Oct. 17 (The Zone in Makati), Oct. 18 (Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club and University of Batangas) and Oct. 19 (Club 650 in Libis).

NCA 5-stag derby today

THE SECOND LEG OF NATIONAL COCKers Association (NCA) 5-Stag Derby series, the exclusive duels featuring some of the country's top cockers, takes centerstage today at Pasay City Cockpit with the backing of Sagupaan Complexor 3000.

Today's 70-fight program is hosted by boxing hero Manny Pacquiao, Rey Briones and Mario Villamor.

Arman Santos's Jade Resort entry topped the opening leg last Sept. 4.

Five stagfests will be presented by NCA at the same venue which will serve as basis in selecting the NCA Stagfighter of the Year winner, said pit manager Eric dela Rosa.

RACING BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Empire Lady (4), Unang Apo (6), Misty (7), Kapit Bahay (2)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Dark Cape (4), Potchi (2), Piker's Magic (7), Just Decision (6)
Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Scud Missile (1), Dom Peri Pink (6), White Princess (2), Shades of Red (9), Lady Inday (8)
Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Money Bank (1), Miata (2), Doomstead (6), Matikas/You Got It All (3)
Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Raise A Dancer (7), Tiger Raffy/Classy Pages (11), Go Go Eigene (40, Now Showing (5), Harrier (2)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Wild Orphan (4), Can And Will (7), Iron King (8), Celestial (2)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—I Don't Dance (7), Hepburn (4), Worth Ur While (1), Miss Malabon (5), Look of Love (9)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Modern Classic (2), Miss Bobon (1), Head Turner (11), Piroutte (8), Magic Dancer (7), Do Re Mi (10)

Gabica cops 9-ball plum over Alcano

GABICA

POWER-BREAKING Antonio Gabica repeated over double world champion Ronato Alcano, 15-9, late Sunday to regain the San Miguel Beer Philippine 9-Ball Open crown at the Decagon Hall in Silvercity Mall at Ortigas Center.

Gabica, the event's inaugural winner in 2004, sank the No. 1 ball using a tough bank shot and then sealed the victory and the P500,000 top purse with a 2-9 combination.

Gabica's road to the race-to-15, alternate-break finals came after wins over 2006 SMB Asian 9-ball tour leg winner Gandy Valle (9-7), Alcano (9-3) and 2007 BCA Enjoypool.com 9-ball champion Dennis Orcollo (9-8). He lost to two-time defending champion Francisco "Django" Bustamante (9-7) in the fourth match of the winners' brackets on Saturday.

The 35-year-old Gabica rebounded by beating Carlo Biado, 9-6, in the losers' bracket and pool maestro Efren "Bata" Reyes, 13-10, in the crossover semifinal round Sunday afternoon.

Alcano beat Eduardo Saracho (9-3) in the opener before yielding to Gabica. The WPC 9-ball and 8-ball titlist dominated the losers' brackets by trouncing 2004 World 9-ball champion Alex Pagulayan (9-6), Russian Petiza (9-7), Warren Kiamco (9-7), National Open titlist Lee Vann Corteza (9-6), and Panfilo Damuag (9-6).

Alcano then nipped Bustamante, 13-12, in the crossover semis before bowing to Gabica and settling for P250,000. Bustamante and Reyes earned P100,000 each.

In the 2004 inaugural leg of the RP 9-Ball Open, Gabica beat Orcollo, 17-6, in the finals by taking 11 straight racks.

It was Gabica's first major title this year after runner-up finishes in the 2007 US Bar Table 9-Ball Championships in Sands Regency Hotel in Reno, Nevada, and the 2007 Cebu 9-Ball Open Challenge. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Anybody's race for NCAA hoops awards

GAMES TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
2 p.m.—San Sebastian vs Letran (Juniors)
4 p.m.—San Beda vs Letran (Seniors)

THANKS TO SAM EKWE, THE CHASE for the NCAA's season-ending individual awards has become a wide open race.

With the San Beda import getting disqualified following an infraction in the middle of the season, this year's honor roll became a tossup among Mapua's Kelvin dela Peña, Ekwe's teammate Yousif Aljamal and Jose Rizal's Marvin Hayes.

The Cardinals' swingman topped the statistical race after the eliminations after powering his team to the Final Four.

The Fil-Canadian even delayed the scheduled surgery on a lump on his right knee to help Mapua, which eventually lost to defending champion San Beda in their semifinal duel last week.

Dela Peña posted 617 SPs after 12 games for an average of 51.4 points. He actually ranked second behind Ekwe, last year's MVP-Rookie of the Year, who kicked Sang Lee of Perpetual Help in the eliminations and incurred a one-game suspension.

The misdemeanor automatic disqualified Ekwe from the awards.

Pro-bound Aljamal is in second place with 507 SPs for an average of 50.7 after 10 games.

The Heavy Bombers' do-it-all forward Hayes came in third with 530 SPs and a 44.2 average. The 6-foot-3 sophomore is also the frontrunner for the Most Improved Player award over Letran's Bryan Faundo and Dino Daa.

Faundo racked up a 40.4 average from 17.3 last season. Daa has a 40.1 average from 22.6 last year.

Red Lions slotman David Marcelo is ahead in the Rookie of the Year race with 28.7 SPs. Teammate Garvo Lanete is second (24.8), while Mapua guard Jonathan Banal is third with 24.2.

Six-foot-6 Jason Ballesteros of San Sebastian is Defensive Player award leader with averages of 11.8 rebounds and 2.4 blocks. Mapua's Neil Pascual is second (7.8rpg, 1.3bpg) and Dela Peña third (8.6 rpg, 2.3 steals per game). *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Fiery Paeng stamps class Down Under

PAENG Nepomuceno and ladies winner Ann-Maree Putney show their trophies after ruling the matchplay finals. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—PAENG Nepomuceno put up another superb pin-toppling demonstration in the 2007 Columbia 3000 South Pacific Classic here Sunday, turning the other contenders into awed spectators just like he did 23 years ago.

The six-time world champion, showing no signs of slowing down at 50, thwarted Jason Belmonte's spirited challenge to rule the men's division and replicate his feat in 1984, when the Filipino became the first non-Australian to rule the tough event.

It was Nepomuceno's 118th win in an illustrious career spanning four decades that saw him earn the bowler of the millennium title as well as entries in the Guinness World Records.

Nepomuceno, now the USBC international ambassador of goodwill, finished with an average of 216 for 11 games of matchplay and a final tournament average of 219 for 29 games. He was sponsored by Philippine Airlines and hosted by Kelly Raveche and his wife.

Second placer to World Cup

Because Nepomuceno is a non-Australian, Belmonte, last year's World Tenpin Masters champion, will carry the country's colors in the World Cup tenpin bowling international finals set in St. Petersburg, Russia, on Nov. 3-10.

Australian veteran Ann-Maree Putney ruled the women's division.

Jason Walsh, the 2006 champion, came in third while Bruno Maglieri, top qualifier of the event, finished fourth.

Ann-Maree proved too strong in the final two games of matchplay.

Finishing only second in the qualifying stage, Ann-Maree also had to hold off challenges from Cassie Staudinger, Rebecca Simpson and Kate Wilton to bag the top prize.

Ann-Maree, a silver medalist in the recent Women's World Championships, averaged 216 for seven games of matchplay and posted a meet average of 209 for 25 games.

Pacman's first 12-rounder impresses Roach

PACQUIAO

CEBU CITY—CELEBRATED AMERican trainer Freddie Roach raised both thumbs yesterday after Manny Pacquiao cruised through his first 12-round session at the Rex "Wakee" Salud gym virtually unscathed and wanting for more

Pacquiao has now sparred 80 rounds in preparation for his mammoth rematch with Marco Antonio Barrera on Oct. 6 at the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas.

"It was OK, he did great," said Roach. "He just stayed a little bit too long on the ropes."

Pacquiao sparred four rounds with Mexican Raymundo Beltran, three rounds with Aaron Melgarejo, three rounds with Mexican David Rodela and two rounds against welterweight Arniel Tinampay.

"He looked in much better shape today than when he first sparred after his flu," said conditioning trainer Dodie Boy Peñalosa, who has been tasked by trainer Buboy Fernandez to check on Pacquiao's stamina.

Meanwhile, Roach vehemently protested a report which came out in several websites yesterday insinuating that he has a tape of Barrera's workouts, and that he has commissioned a spy in the Mexican's camp.

"That's a total lie," said the two-time Trainer of the Year awardee. "Tell them it's not true. Why should I do that? I don't need a tape. We already know how to beat Barrera." *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

Alora, 5 others named MVPs in Best of Best

NATIONAL TEAM MAINSTAY AND BANtamweight-lightweight gold medalist Elaine Alora of St. Benilde led six players who bagged most valuable player honors in the 2007 Samsung Best of the Best National Taekwondo Championships at the Glorietta in Makati over the weekend.

Elaine is the sister of Asian Games pinweight bronze medalist Kathlyn Eunice.

Other MVPs in the week-long tournament sponsored by Samsung were men's finweight champion Edison Bagaipo, also of St. Benilde, Jyra Marie Lizardo (junior women), Sidney Crispino (junior men), Geena Mae Gadit (grade school girls) and Edmark Baydo (grade school boys).

The awardees won Samsung NV3 digicams each. The event will be telecast on Solar Sports starting at 12 noon on Sept. 22.

Meanwhile, in one of the best-fought matches in the finals on Sunday, Anthony John Samia of University of the East beat Paul Nikko Dizon of Meycauayan, Bulacan, to bag the middleweight gold in the junior division.

GRADE SCHOOL WINNERS: (Girls) UFC's Kate de Guzman d. Nueva Ecija's Lance Calma, 7-0 (Group 1); Region 12's Vanessa Uyanguren d. Antique's Faye Lopez, 6-5 (Group 2); Montea's Paulina Naguiat d. Antique's Stephanie Conchico, 1-0 (Group 3); Braveheart's Devorah Alacar d. Olympia's Regine Lumbo, 7-5 (Group 4-A); Central's Ina Langit d. Antipolo's Hannah Mendoza, 8-4 (Group 5); Charlene Casia d. Nueva Ecija's Jennifer dela Cruz, 11-5 (Group 6); (Boys) D Club's RJ Ramos d. Kagayan TKD's Walter Luminarias, 1-0 (Group 2-A); Ateneo's Jean Nigel Buan d. Baguio's Monsour Salazar, 6-5 (Group 1-B); Philippine Navy's Edmark Baydo d. John Quiriado, 1-0 (Group 2-B); D Club's TJ Avelino d. Jhon Das Lim, 9-5 (Group 3-A); UFC's Benjamin Sembrano d. La Salle's Charles Claro, 5-4 (Group 4-A); Powerhaus' Eugene Torres d. Meycauayan's Bernard Razon, 12-7 (Group 4-B); Tip Top's Kirk Barbosa d. D Club's John Turingan, 5-0 (Group 5); Kagayan TKD's Kevin Sia d. Kagayan TKD's Mark Luminarias, 10-5 (Group 6). ***Romina S. Austria***

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Regional Office No. V
Legazpi City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SUPPLY OF 5,100,000 PIECES OF 1-KILOGRAM PLASTIC CONTAINER

The National Food Authority Region V invites all plastic container manufacturers/suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of 5,100,000 pieces of 1 kilogram plastic container with the following specifications

Province	Volume	Specification	Pick-up Lowest Bid Price	Approved Budget for Contract	Source of Fund
Lot 1 – Cam. Norte	1,700,000	6"10".05mm	P 0.40/pc.	P 680,000.00	Corporate Operating Budget
Lot II – Cam. Sur	158,000	6.5" x 10.5 x .05 mm	P 0.50/pc	P 79,000.00	COB
Lot III – Masbate	1,600,000	6.5" x 10.5" x .05 mm	P 0.50/pc.	P 800,000.00	COB
Lot IV – Masbate	1,642,000	6.5" x 10.5 x .07 mm	P 0.65/pc	P 1,067,300.00	COB
TOTAL	5,100,000			Php 2,626,300.00	COB

Prospective bidders should have an experience of having completed within the last five (5) years of Single Contract that is similar to the contract to be bid, and whose value adjusted to the current prices using the wholesale consumer price index must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the Approved budget for the contract (ABC) of the project to be bid.

Or in lieu of the above, prospective bidders should have completed at least three similar contracts and the aggregate contract amounts should be equivalent to at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC for the project to be bid. Provided, that the largest of these similar contracts must be equivalent to at least twenty five percent (25%) of the ABC of the project to be bid. Provided further that the business/company of the prospective bidder has been in existence for at least three (3) consecutive years prior to publication of the IEAB.

Prospective bidders may bid for one lot or a number of lots of his choice or all of the lots which he could be eligible.

The Eligibility Check Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification, and award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of Republic Act (RA) 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The Bidding will be conducted at the NFA Conference room, 2nd floor, NFA Regional Office, Pier Site, Legazpi City on the following schedule of Activities:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	September 17-28, 2007
2. Pre-bidding Conference	September 27, 2007 @ 10:00 AM
3. Eligibility Check/Opening of Bids	October 09, 2007 @ 10:00 AM

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from National Food Authority, Region V, Pier Site, Legazpi City upon payment to the NFA Cashier of non-refundable fee in the amount of Three Thousand Pesos (Php 3,000.00) for lots I, III and IV. For lot II, a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00) is required.

The mode of payment shall be in cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

All Bids must be accompanied by Bid security in the form and in the amount as indicated in the Bid documents. Late bids shall not be accepted.

For further inquiries/details you may contact RBAC Secretariat at Telephone Numbers (052) 480-7015; 480-7933; & 820-0018.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY EFFECTS OR INFORMALITIES FOUND THEREIN AND ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH IN ITS JUDGEMENT ARE MOST REASONABLE AND ADVANTAGEOUS TO NFA. THE DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE AS CONFIRMED BY THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR SHALL BE DEEMED FINAL.

(Sgd.) JOSE B. GUEVARA
RBAC, Chairman

(PDI - September 18, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

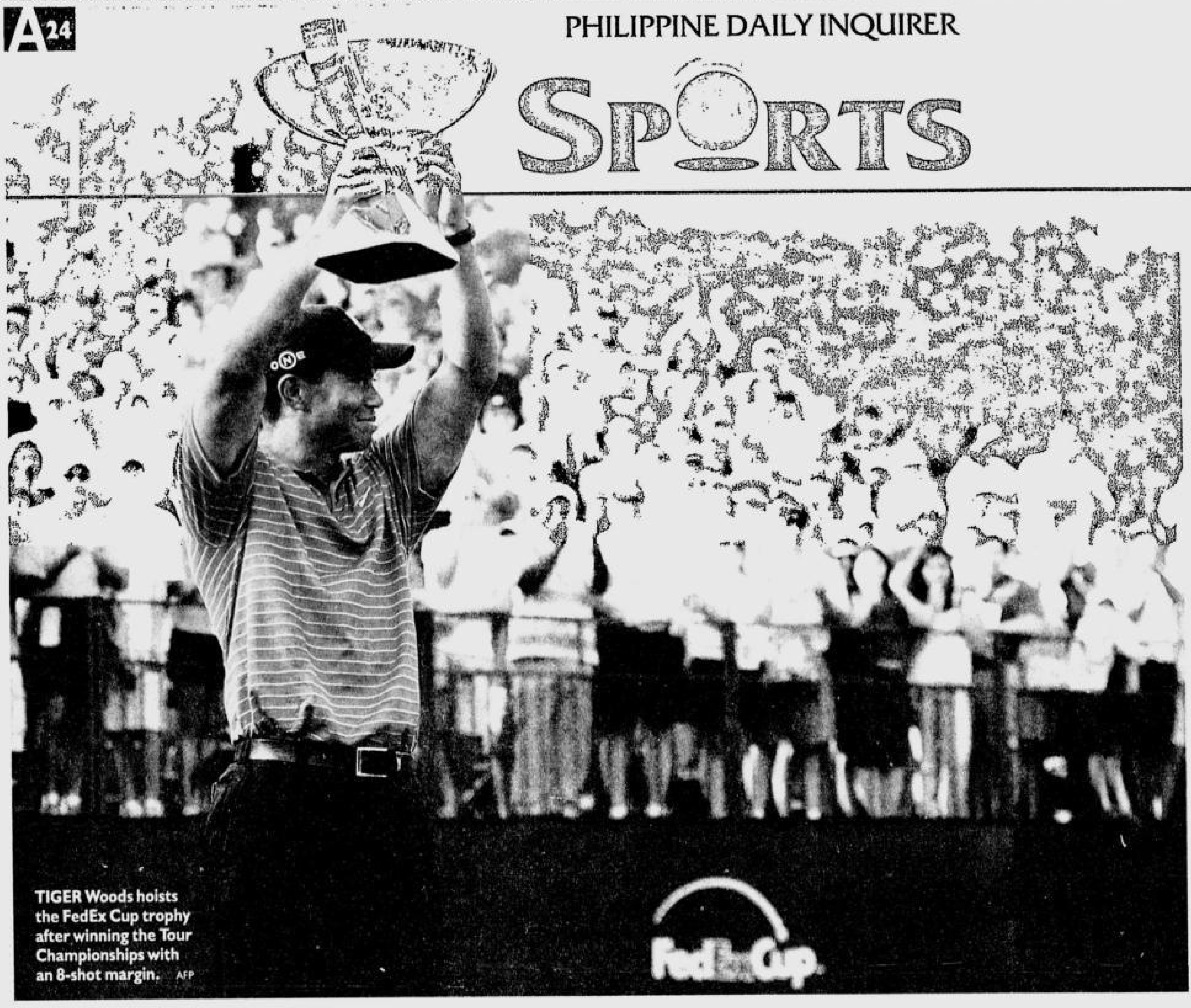
Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
HOLCIM PHILIPPINES, INC. Level 4 Phinma Plaza, 39 Plaza Drive Rockwell Center, Makati City	Alan David Michener Australian	Corporate Safety Manager
ASIA PACIFIC CHINESE MEDIA INC. G/F Noah's Ark Bldg., 303 Escolta St., Manila	Mun Kong Seen Malaysian	Senior Editor
COMVERSE PHILIPPINES INC. 29/F Philamlife Tower, 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Voon Khong Chang Malaysian	Project Consultant
COMVERSE PHILIPPINES INC. 29/F Philamlife Tower, 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Xin Zhou Chinese	Project Consultant
BASE CAMP INTERNATIONAL TOUR INC. Unit 704-C 1129 Concepcion St., Ermita, Manila	Yun Mo (w/o HAN) Korean	Marketing Manager
PHOENIX MARITIME CORP. 6/F Feliza Bldg., 108 V.A. Rufino St., Legaspi Vill., Makati City	Shuji Kawabe Japanese	Principal's Representative
WORLD VISION INTL. HUMAN RESOURCES INC. 3/F Expocraft Bldg., 1008 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City	Aly Ahmed Shehada Pakistani	Director
VIVA MANILA CLUB-THEATER & KTV RESTAURANT INC. 2332 Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	Haruhiko Ichinowatari Japanese	Floor Manager
GOODMORNING INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 572 EDSA, Brgy. 95 Dist. 17, Pacita, Caloocan City	Duck Hwan Cho Korean	Chairman
PHIL. TRANSPORT XPRESS CORP. Financial Center, D. Macapagal Blvd., Pasay City	Dong Ho Shin Korean	Sales Manager
UPPER LENDING INVESTOR CORPORATION 51-D Sct. Fuentebella St., Laging Handa, Quezon City	Kulwant Singh Sekhon Indian	Finance Manager
SINGULARITY, INC. Unit 11-A Country Space 1 Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Younsoo Seo (wife of KIM) Korean	Project Manager
HS SUNAR CREDIT RESOURCES INC. 30 Capernaum St., Multinational Village, Moonwalk, Parañaque City	Gurmail Singh Indian	Assistant Credit Manager

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC, Regional Director

(PDI–September 18, 2007)

SPORTS



TIGER Woods hoists the FedEx Cup trophy after winning the Tour Championships with an 8-shot margin. AFP

Americans prove they're no chokers

HALMSTAD, SWEDEN—THE AMERICANS were hardly chokers when the stakes were highest at the Solheim Cup.

Dominating the singles matches like they always have, the Americans celebrated one of the most coveted wins in women's golf Sunday, a 16-12 decision over Europe that ended any thought that they might be the group of "Chokin' freakin' dogs," that Dottie Pepper said they were.

Led by Morgan Pressel's upset over Annika Sorenstam and Stacy Prammanasudh's surprising win over Suzann Pettersen, the Americans went 8-3-1 in singles. They captured the Solheim on foreign soil for only the second time.

On Saturday, after the United States turned a couple of looming wins into disappointing ties, Pepper called the Americans "Chokin' freakin' dogs"—a comment she made when she thought she was off the air, but wasn't.

"It was hurtful, very, very hurtful to all of us on the team," said assistant captain Beth Daniel. "Dottie's been there. She knows what it's like. Even if she said it off the air, it was ill-spirited."

The Europeans went into the final round with an 8 1/2-7 1/2 lead, and the Americans —with four rookies on the team—looked like they really might be too young and nervous to actually win this event. When the singles rolled around, those setbacks were forgotten and the Americans took control quickly. *AP*

8-SHOT FEDEX ROUT

Tiger gobbles up field

JOHNSON

CALCAVECCHIA

ATLANTA—THIS NEW ERA IN GOLF sure had a familiar ending.

Tiger Woods never paid much attention to the FedEx Cup until it was shining before him on a pedestal on the 18th green Sunday at East Lake. He always figured his name would be the first engraved on the new trophy as long as he kept winning.

And there was never a doubt.

In his final event of another spectacular season, Woods closed with a 4-under 66 to shatter the tournament record and win the Tour Championship by eight shots for his second straight victory in these PGA Tour Playoffs.

The only new twist? It was the first time Woods won two trophies at one tournament.

Along with earning $1.26 million (euro910,000) in cash for winning the Tour Championship for his seventh PGA Tour title of the year, Woods was a runaway winner of the FedEx Cup and the $10 million (euro7.2 million) that goes into a retirement account.

"I don't look at what the purse is or the prize money," Woods said. "You play. And when you play, you play to win, period. That's how my dad raised me, is you go out there and win. If you win, everything will take care of itself. You take great pride in what you do on the golf course, and when you're able to win events, that's when you can go home and be very proud of what you've done."

If this was supposed to be golf's version of the Super Bowl, Woods spent most of the final round taking a knee.

The only drama was whether he would break the 72-hole scoring record on the PGA Tour. With a late bogey, Woods had to settle for a 23-under 257, the lowest of his career, breaking the Tour Championship record by six shots.

Masters champion Zach Johnson (68) and Mark Calcavecchia (71) tied for second.

Steve Stricker and Phil Mickelson were the only other players with a realistic chance of capturing the FedEx Cup, and their hopes were gone by the weekend. Stricker closed with a 67 and tied for 17th to finish second in the FedEx Cup, worth $3-M in retirement money.

Woods, however, made no secret of which trophy meant more.

Woods ended the year with four victories in his last five starts, and now has won 15 times in his last 31 tour events over the last two years.

There was no drama at East Lake, not with Woods hitting on all cylinders to wrap up another phenomenal year. Along with seven victories, his adjusted scoring average of 67.79 matches the PGA Tour record he set in 2000.

He has played his last five tournaments in 75-under par, and his victory at East Lake pushed his season earnings to $10,876,052 (euro7,847,079). That's just $29,114 (euro21,006) short of the tour record set by Vijay Singh in 2004, when he played 29 times. Woods played 16 events this year.

His primary objective is winning majors, and he already has 13 of those. The World Golf Championships were created in 1999, and he has won 14 of 25.

Woods won for the 61st time in his career, at 31 making him the youngest player to reach that mark. That leaves him one victory shy of Arnold Palmer's 62 career victories. *AP*

2 eagles power Hansen to title

PULHEIM, GERMANY—SOREN HANSEN had two late eagles in a 5-under 67 Sunday to win the Mercedes-Benz Championship by four strokes.

Hansen, who won his second career title, finished at 17-under 271. Phillip Archer (68) and Alastair Forsyth (70) shared second place at the no-cut event, which drew 27 title winners to the field.

Hansen chipped in from the rough on the 13th hole green for his first eagle of the day, which gave him a four-stroke lead. Two holes later, an approach shot escaped the bunker and rolled 12 feet from the pin to set up a second eagle.

Thomas Bjorn (72) began the day even with Hansen, but a double-bogey on the sixth hole dropped him back. He finished fourth.

Hansen has six top-20 finishes in eight events and the 33-year-old's aim is to make the Ryder Cup team.

Retief Goosen (70) finished at 282, and John Daly (69) and Bernhard Langer (76) at 283. US Open champion Angel Cabrera (73) struggled the whole week and finished at 293. *AP*

Russia stuns Spain for Euro crown

KIRILENKO: MVP

MADRID—RUSSIA STUNNED hosts and world champion Spain, 60-59, in the European championship final to secure the gold medal on Sunday.

Jon Robert Holden sank the winning two-pointer with two seconds remaining leaving the favorites Spain with silver.

Russia earned automatic qualification to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. Spain has already qualified.

Russia last won gold in 1985, when they competed as the USSR, making it its15th gold medal in the Euros. It was Spain's sixth failure in the final and has never won gold.

Russia's Utah Jazz forward Andrei Kirilenko scored a game-high 17 points and was voted the tournament's MVP. He was supported by Victor Khryapa with 12 rebounds and seven points.

"This was a meeting of David against Goliath, we faced the beast and knocked him down," said Russia coach David Blatt.

"Our plan was to stay in the game and make them feel the heat, the pressure of 15,000 fans, and to see how they play.

Fortunately, we did that and we won." Urged on by their passionate home support, Spain tore into Russia at the start and opened up a 12-point lead early in the second quarter.

Lithuania took bronze after beating 2005 winner Greece, 78-69, in the third-place playoff match. *Reuters*

RUSSIAN players throw coach David Blatt in the air after their victory. AFP

Mercury new WNBA champs

AUBURN HILLS, MICHIGAN—PENNY TAYlor scored 30 points and the Phoenix Mercury cruised to a 108-92 victory Sunday over the defending champion Detroit Shock in the fifth and deciding game of the WNBA finals.

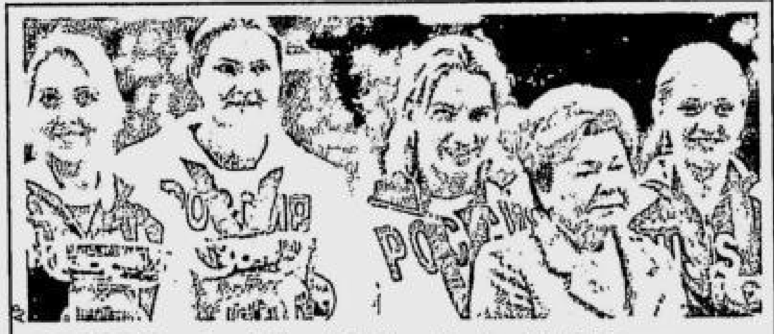
Cappie Pondexter added 26 and Diana Taurasi had 17 for Phoenix, the first road team to win the title away from home.

"It's been a long time coming," said Pondexter. "It's something I've been waiting for, working hard for, and it's finally here."

The Shock lost the last two games of the series, foiling their bid to become the third WNBA team to win back-to-back championships.

Phoenix, taking some steam out of the fired-up home crowd, raced to a 20-9 lead midway through the first quarter.

"This is an unfamiliar position—being up here without a bottle of champagne," Detroit coach Bill Laimbeer said as he opened his postgame news conference. *AP*



CHAMPS: Team Russia (from left) Elena Vesnina, Nadia Petrova, Svetlana Kuznetsova and Anna Chakvetadze hold Fed Cup trophy replicas with Naina Yeltsina, widow of first Russian President Boris Yeltsin, after beating Italy at the Fed Cup final match in Moscow Sunday.

Raikkonen tops Belgian GP; Alonso trounces Hamilton

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, BELGIUM—KImi Raikkonen dominated the race, and Fernando Alonso dominated his teammate.

Raikkonen won his third straight Belgian Grand Prix on Sunday ahead of Felipe Massa in a 1-2 for Ferrari.

Two-time defending champion Alonso finished third and moved within two points of McLaren teammate Lewis Hamilton at the top of the standings, only days after the team was fined $100 million for having secret data from its main rival Ferrari. Alonso, starting third on the grid ahead of Hamilton, immediately moved over to attack the Source hairpin, blocking Hamilton's way.

Raikkonen's victory only looked in doubt when Massa launched a late attack with three of the 44 laps to go. *AP*

Rally champion, son die in helicopter crash

LONDON—FORMER WORLD RALLY champion Colin McRae and his 5-year-old son were among four people killed in a helicopter crash this weekend in southern Scotland, police said Sunday.

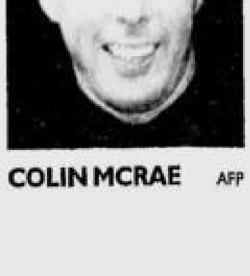
Scotsman McRae, his son Johnny and two family friends including a 6-year-old boy were killed when the 39-year-old driver's Squirrel Two aircraft crashed in the grounds of his Lanark home on Saturday.

Tributes poured in from the sporting and political arenas in honor of McRae; who in 1995 was the first Briton to win the world rally championship.

The two others were named as six-year-old Ben Porcelli, 6, of Lanark, and Graeme Duncan, 37, of France.

Colin Steele McRae, a licensed pilot, was born in Lanark on Aug. 5, 1968. He had two children, Hollie and Johnny, with his wife Alison.

Nicky Grist, McRae's co-driver since 1997, expressed his sorrow on Sunday. *AFP*



COLIN MCRAE AFP

JOHNNY MCRAE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2007

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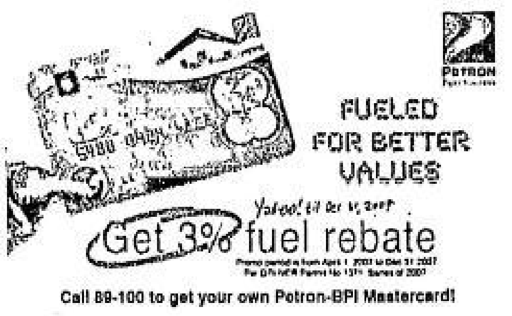

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ADB raises RP growth outlook

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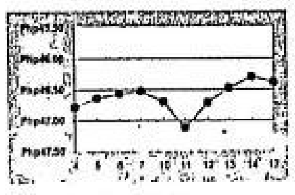


SEPTEMBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P46.39 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 17, 2007

STOCK MARKET

Shares close 0.4% up

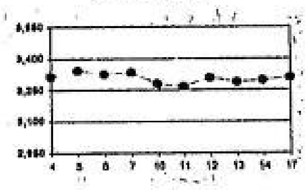
SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.4 percent higher Monday in cautious trade ahead of the US Federal Reserve's decision on interest rates, dealers said.

The composite index

SHARES/ B2

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

SEPTEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B3)

For '07, bank expects higher GDP figure, lower inflation

By Doris C. Dumlao and Michelle V. Remo

THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK HAS SHARPLY upgraded its growth outlook for the Philippines for this year and the next.

ADB's upbeat prospects were shared by investment bank DBS, which also raised its economic growth forecast for the Philippines from 5.9 to 6.9 percent this year—higher than the government's official target.

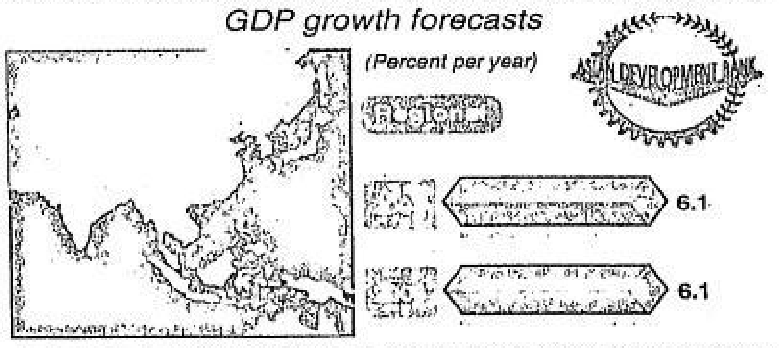
For this year, ADB said that the country would have a much higher growth in gross domestic product, projecting it to reach 6.6 percent, up from its earlier forecast of 5.4 percent.

In its "Asian Development Outlook," a twice-a-year economic publication that was released yesterday, ADB reported brighter prospects for the whole of developing Asia. But it also warned of a "hazy" period for the region in 2008 due to pro-

ADB/ A2

ADB Southeast Asia outlook

GDP growth forecasts



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2007	9.2	6.2	6.8	5.6	n/a	6.6	7.5	4.0	8.3
2008	8.0	6.4	6.5	5.7	n/a	6.0	6.0	5.0	8.5

Source: ADB Outlook 2007 170907 AFP

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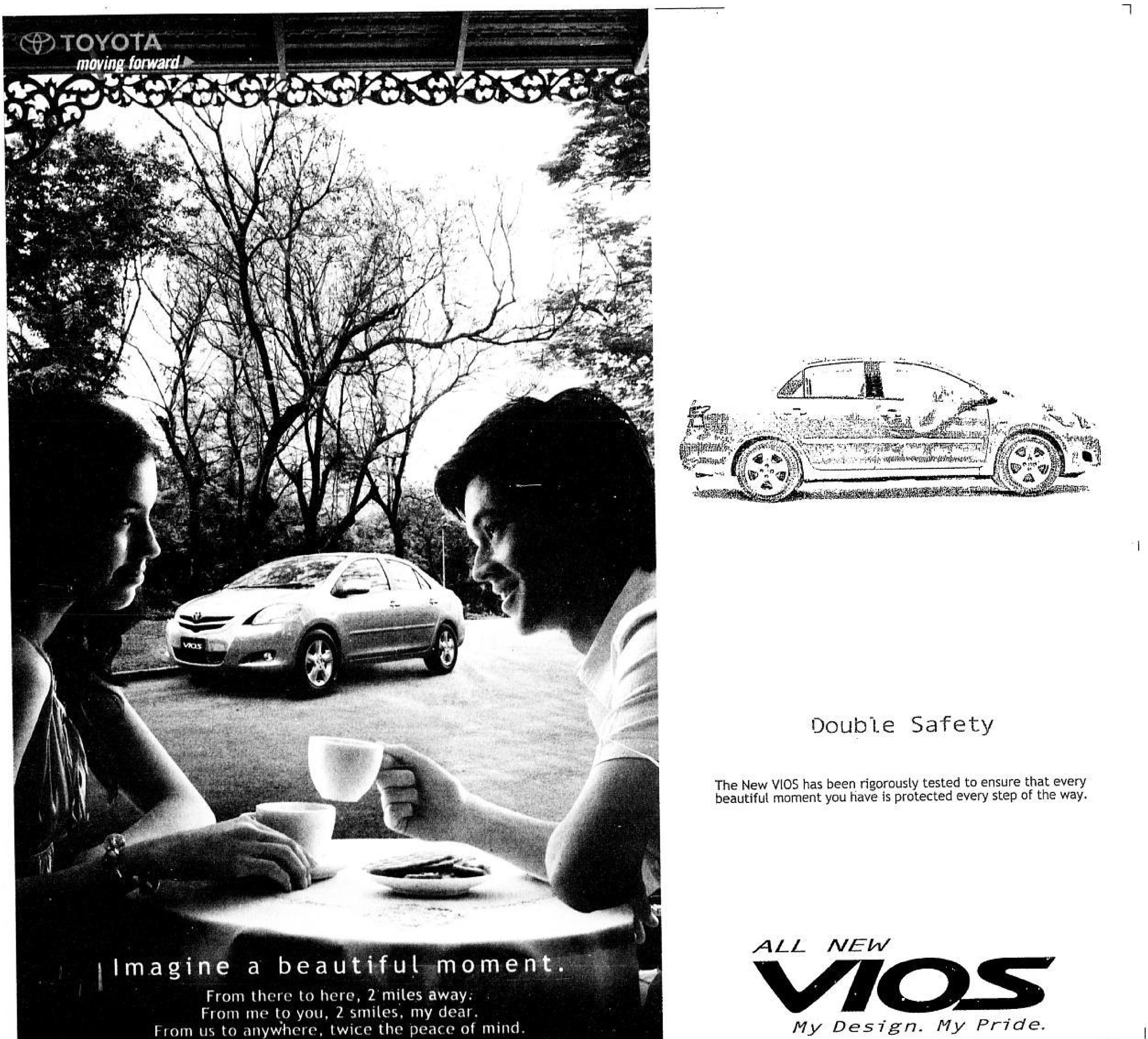
Lower power rates for ecozone locators OKd /B4



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Bank lending up 6.9% reflecting robust trade

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANK LENDING IN THE COUNTRY grew by 6.9 percent year-on-year in July, higher than the 4.7-percent expansion in June, reflecting robust economic activity during the period.

The reported growth in bank lending excluded the sector's short-term placements with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. If lending to the BSP were factored in, the industry's annual growth in outstanding loans would be lower at 3.4 percent in July against the 4.9-percent rise in June.

"Lending to all sectors of the economy registered expansions, except in the mining, manufacturing and utilities sectors, which registered declines," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a press statement.

In the first semester of the year, the country's domestic output rose by an impressive 7.3 percent on strong private consumption and state infrastructure spending.

In the same month last year, growth in lending was at a marginal 0.5 percent.

In the case of the utilities and manufacturing sectors, the declines were less than those recorded in the previous month.

The transportation, storage and communications, as well as construction, sectors led the expansion at 11 percent and 9.9 percent, respectively.

While the financial institutions, real estate and business services sector grew only by 4.6 percent during the period, it posted the highest growth at 21.1 percent net of transactions with the central bank.

"Bank lending is a key driver of domestic liquidity and at the same time a major indicator of economic activity," Tetangco said. "The BSP will continue to closely watch developments in bank lending, with a view to ensuring stable prices while providing for the liquidity needs of the economy."

Meanwhile, the BSP chief said that the slower growth observed in most of the sectors could be attributed partly to the fact that companies were increasingly sourcing their funding requirements from outside the banking system.

Tetangco said there were indications that corporate borrowings from nonbank sources continued to grow during the first eight months of 2007.

SMEs urged to tap ₱280-M export fund

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INdustry is urging small and medium enterprises to tap the P280-million export promotion fund (EPF), advising firms to follow the strict requirements.

Trade Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino yesterday said in a statement that interested exporters organizations and associations are being encouraged to submit their project proposals to the Export Development Council for evaluation.

"The EPF is not a loan facility but a supplemental fund for export promotion activities of our SME exporters," Aquino explained.

He said proposals should follow the strategies of the existing Philippine Export Development Plan (PEDP): Maximizing export investment opportunities offered by trade agreements; pursuing market-driven strategy that would link the Philippines' supply capacity closer to the high impact market; streamlining export and import procedures and facilitation; and develop more competitive export products and services and diversify markets.

Made available through the EDC, the EPF was put up by the DTI, which contributed P100 million; Department of Budget and Management, P100 million; National Economic and Development Authority, P20 million; and Philippine Exporters Confederation, P10 million.

To avail of the EPF, an enterprise should be involved in the export of emerging products or trade with emerging markets, with high value-added items prioritized.

According to Aquino, SMEs that want to tap the EPF must shell out a counterpart fund that is at least 20 percent of the total project cost.

So far, 22 project proposals have been recommended to the EPF Committee for review and approval.

Of these, five proposal representing a total of P13 million have been approved.

In 1st half, GSIS net income hit ₱25B

Gov't fund on track to its full-year goal of posting P50B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE System said it posted a net income of P25 billion in the first half, benefiting from the stock market boom during the period.

Winston Garcia, GSIS president and general manager, said in a press conference yesterday that the pension fund manager was targeting a net income of P48 billion to P50 billion for the entire year, higher than the P41 billion it posted in 2006.

Garcia said the projected increase in the GSIS' net income for the year would be attributed to its income from portfolio investments and improved efficiency in collecting delinquent accounts.

He said the surge in stock market prices in the first half prompted the GSIS to sell its equity investments.

"Many were asking why we had to sell when the stock market was doing well," Garcia said. "My answer was, 'no one really knows how high stock prices will get, and you do not sell when prices are already going down.'"

He said equity shares the GSIS sold were blue-chip stocks, including Ayala Land Inc., Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and San Miguel Corp. The GSIS had already sold about P25 billion worth of stock investments over the past eight months, Garcia added.

The GSIS chief said the pension fund manager still has P12 billion worth of stock investments. The GSIS may decide to sell these within the short term.

Garcia claimed that the GSIS had so much liquidity, that tapping offshore investments has become a priority of the pension fund manager.

He said that the excess liquidity of the GSIS, confronted with numerous complaints on inaccessibility of loan benefits for members, should be addressed by investing offshore. The GSIS earlier announced that it was placing $1 billion on offshore investments.

"We want to invest abroad because there is not enough security in the stock market that can accommodate our liquidity," Garcia said.

He reported that the GSIS has P150 billion in investable funds and nearly liquid assets. He said the P55 billion in GSIS cash that had been placed in short-term deposits in banks, reflected the pension fund's problem on excess liquidity.

The GSIS is in the process of selecting a foreign fund manager for the $1 billion it will allocate for offshore investments. The group targets to earn 8-percent income, net of management fees, from its investment offshore.

The GSIS said there were 36 fund managers that submitted proposals to the GSIS.

The $1 billion that the GSIS will invest abroad make up 12 percent of its total assets. The GSIS intends to retain 88 percent of its assets in domestic investments.

Die, mold makers to aid PhUV builders

EFFORTS OF DOMESTIC AUTO parts makers to mass produce a low-priced utility vehicle got a boost after the Philippine Die and Mold Association committed to contribute skills and resources to the program.

Ferdinand Raquelsantos, director of the Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturers Association of the Philippines, said PDMA's interest in the Philippine Utility Vehicle started when the former saw the prototype displayed during a recent exhibition.

PDMA groups some 70 companies involved in metalwork and related equipment, including dies, molds, machine tools, sheet metal and metalworking machinery, equipment, tools, accessories and hardware.

Raquelsantos said MVPMAP displayed the PhUV during the 2007 PDMA Exhibition & Conference held from Aug. 22 to 25 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City.

The official, who also heads MVPMAP's PhUV technical working group, said PDMA officials were looking into what molds, dies, tools, equipment and hardware PDMA members could develop for the PhUV if it went into mass production.

"This support, especially in die and mold development, would increase the quality of the component parts and increase the productivity of the manufacturing process," Raquelsantos said.

"This joint effort of both associations to make better quality parts at a faster rate [brings us closer to our goal of building a vehicle with at least 60-percent local content]," he added. "Hopefully, together, we can develop and localize more parts for the PhUV so that we can lessen our dependence on imported parts."

MVPMAP launched the PhUV prototype in June, which it designed, developed and built despite limited resources.

The group's goal is to mass produce locally a utility vehicle with a high level of value-added local parts and labor to help liven up the local parts making industry.

Raquelsantos said MVPMAP members have been reeling from the effects of decreasing production due to the increase in importation of brand-new, completely built up vehicles relative to the assembly of completely knocked-down kits.

MVPMAP also blames the "unabated" importation of used vehicles despite prohibition by law.

"Most of our members are currently operating at only 40 percent of plant capacity and some have closed shop," Raquelsantos said.

The 50,000 direct workers dependent on the local parts making industry are pinning their hopes on the PhUV to be their vehicle to recovery," he added. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

Bargain new hotel, anyone?

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

EVERYBODY IN BUSINESS SAYS THAT the hotel and leisure sector is hot today.

Hmmm, is that perhaps why some foreign groups are poised to take over a new P800-million hotel at the perimeter of Makati's central business district, taking it over for a song?

It's the "Best Western Astor Hotel" on Makati Avenue, which last year already passed the rigorous quality test of the US-based hotel chain of the same name.

The owner of the hotel is a company called TF Ventures, chaired by the media favorite Manuel Morato, aka Manoling.

Based on news reports, Manoling is in a foul mood these days because of what he called the "raid" on his hotel business.

The apparent raider is Pogi.

I am not kidding: Its real name is Philippine Opportunity for Growth and Income, bankrolled by Deutsche Bank (German) and Cargill (American).

Pogi bought the loan account of TF Ventures from the state-owned LandBank as a nonperforming asset under the controversial SPV, or the special purpose vehicle.

Even before the SPV law was enacted, the business sector noted that the scheme would be open to abuse, particularly by big moneyed foreign corporate raiders.

And that's why Manoling must be spoiling for a fight again these days.

* * *

TF VENTURES borrowed some P400 million from LandBank, with the first release made in 1994 and the last one was made, if you can believe it, five years later in 1999.

From what I heard, because of the delay in the hotel's opening, apparently due partly to the delay in the loan release, TF Ventures was able to convince LandBank to restructure the loan.

Thus LandBank agreed to lengthen the repayment period for the loan to 15 years.

Do I have a surprise for you! Even with the loan restructuring in place, LandBank put up the TF Ventures account, and thus the hotel, for sale as part of its NPA to ... well, who else but Pogi.

Pogi then went to court for approval of its "rehabilitation plan" for TF Ventures, prompting the court without much ado, to assign a "receiver" as a referee between Pogi and TF Ventures.

Guess what? The court-appointed receiver, a certain Rosario Bernaldo, is recommending the takeover of the hotel by Pogi.

And yes, Orestes, she wants the takeover despite her observation that the hotel business can still be rehabilitated!

In effect, she wants the TF Ventures loans to be converted into equity, giving Pogi almost 90-percent ownership of the company—and thus the hotel.

Never mind that, under the law, foreign companies are allowed to own only up to 40 percent of real estate properties.

It's funny, Annie, but the receiver also wants the Deutsche Bank-Cargill group to manage the hotel, simply by booting out the existing Filipino management.

Not only that, she declares that the total claim of Pogi against TF Ventures amounts to P1.8 billion.

Again, the original loan of TF Ventures amounted to P400 million.

You will never guess how much Pogi bought the loan account from LandBank. Between us girls, Pogi only paid a startling P85 million.

Invest P85 million and get back P1.8 billion? Not bad, no?

* * *

CATCHING a lot of media attention lately—at least more than the conviction of the man named Band ... Wrist Band ... for plunder, or even the Senate "take-2" of the self-declared wire-tapping Air Force sergeant Vidal Doble—is the ZTE controversy.

And why is that?

Well, to start with, the supposed "overprice" in the ZTE deal is really a huge one. Moreover, it is said that the issue involves people really close to the Lola at the Palace. And then you have the son of the Speaker of the House right smack at the center of the controversy. In other words, it is, in reporter's lingo, a "juicy" item.

As for Doble's double take at the Senate, well, our contacts in business are saying that he did not make an impact in media at all. The guy did not have anything new to disclose to the public, anyway.

Okay, one of the items heavily advertised by Doble's handlers was that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had something to do with the wire-tapping done by Doble and company.

You also have the "Madame X" angle, which turned out to be the Palace hanger-on Remedios Poblador.

They all went pffft, too, for the simple reason that the issue must fight for media attention against the Wrist Band verdict and the multibillion-peso ZTE deal.

And so, at the losing end of it all was Doble himself. Between you and me, I heard that some media outfits are looking into his personal life.

* * *

AS FOR THAT guilty verdict in Wrist Band's plunder case, the financial markets already discounted the possibility of civil disturbance.

What does that mean? It seems that the business community is tired of the politics surrounding the Wrist Band affair.

Yet his camp is now taking the media line that the guilty verdict was a "political vendetta" from this administration.

I have one problem with that line: Why does the Wrist Band camp now talk about presidential pardon or—what was their term again—"amnesty?"

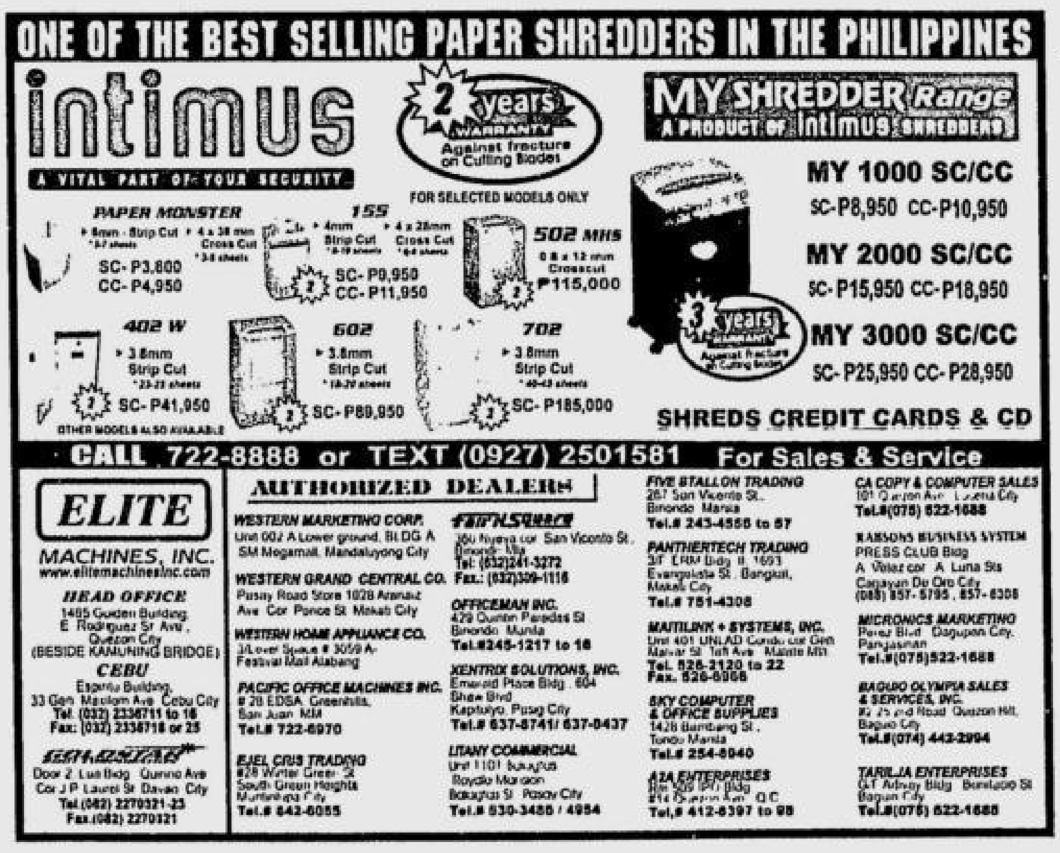
If it was nothing but a political vendetta, why should Wrist Band accept favors from the same people who are ganging up on him? Beats me, too!

And that is precisely the scenario that the business sector perhaps want to take shape: An end to the Wrist Band-Arroyo politics.

Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr., president of the Philippine Exporters Confederation, for instance favors a presidential pardon for Wrist Band, or even a "parole," since the ousted president already served six years of his sentence.

Thus, for the country to move on, the business community wants a closure to the Wrist Band episode.

It already did a lot of damage to the economy.



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ADB raises RP growth outlook

From page B1

longed global financial turmoil and continuing risks of an economic slowdown in the United States.

The country's GDP, the single most closely watched economic indicator that sums up all goods and services produced by the domestic economy, grew by 7.3 percent in the first semester—its strongest in 20 years.

"The economy grew much faster than expected in the first half, with gains in net exports, private consumption, and government spending," the ADB report said. "Remittances from overseas workers continue to support residential real estate investment and private consumption, providing a strong impetus to overall growth."

The ADB also noted that inflation pressures had subsided significantly, with a stronger currency and receding effects of an increase in the value-added tax rate in early 2006.

Thus, the inflation forecast for the Philippines was also lowered to 2.9 percent from 4.8 percent for this year, and to 3.5 percent from 5 percent for next year.

DBS, on the other hand, expressed its confidence that the Arroyo administration would continue to pump-prime the economy through infrastructure spending.

It noted that the 10-percent growth in investments was largely due to public construction.

"Clearly, spending related to the May 14 elections was more generous than we thought—government consumption jumped 13.5 percent year-on-year while investment accelerated to 10 percent," DBS said in its study entitled, "Economics Markets Strategy."

The investment bank admitted that it was surprised with the country's economic performance in the first half. Prior to the release of the first semester economic report, the bank only projected a 5.9-percent growth rate for the economy for the entire year.

Also, DBS has projected that inflation would settle at an average of 2.6 percent this year. Inflation would likely increase next year, due to the effects of robust growth on consumer prices, and could hit 3.5 percent.

Shares ...

From page B1

added 12.88 points to 3,307.43 after moving between 3,294.55 and 3,314.57, on turnover of 3.4 billion shares valued at P3.4 billion ($73.51 million). Gainers beat losers 44 to 36, while 65 stocks were flat.

The broader all-share index was up a marginal 0.83 point at 2,087.57.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone was up P15 at P2,705. Shares in Ayala Land rose 25 centavos to P14.25.

AFP

BOP surplus hits $6.75B

Strong inflows of investments, OFW remittances

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES POSTED A record-high balance of payments surplus of $6.75 billion from January to August this year on robust inflows from overseas Filipinos and foreign investors, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

In August, the surplus amounted to $2.2 billion, up from only $359 million in the same period last year, even as the financial volatility due to the US housing slump had triggered net foreign capital outflows from the local stock market during the period.

The eight-month BOP surplus was more than double the $2.5 billion posted in the same period last year. It has exceeded the BSP's revised target of $6.3 billion for the whole year.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world. Any transaction that involves foreign exchange payment by a Philippine resident—such as importation and debt servicing—is a deficit item in the BOP. Any deal that gives rise to receipt of foreign exchange, is a surplus item.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the high surplus was attributed to the continued strong inflows from exports, overseas Filipino remittances and net foreign direct equity and portfolio investments.

"The BSP also realized higher investment income," Tetangco said.

BSP sources said the central bank was starting to unwind some of its foreign currency swaps, bringing in more dollars to its reserves. These dollars, however, were purchased earlier from the spot foreign exchange market. The rising BOP thus led to the strong build-up in the gross international reserves (GIR), which breached the $30-billion mark as of end-August.

"Some of those swaps had matured," the official said.

In August alone, some $2.3 billion was added to the GIR even as the BSP was widely believed to have become a net seller of dollars at the foreign exchange market.

In recent months, the BSP intensified its use of foreign currency swaps to mop up excess foreign inflows. Under these transactions, the BSP immediately exchanges the foreign currencies it buys from the spot foreign exchange market but the equivalent peso is locked in. The BSP's outstanding swaps, which hit as high as $10 billion earlier this year, are thus an indicator of how much more its GIR could rise if such contracts were scrapped.

Prior to the financial volatility in August, the BSP was a heavy buyer of dollars at the Philippine Dealing System.

BSP sources said monetary measures earlier implemented to curb the growth of broad money supply made it possible for the central bank to get back the dollars earlier tucked into currency swaps.

In the meantime, the peso yesterday rallied to as high as 46.12 to the US dollar ahead of the US Federal Reserve's expected cut in benchmark interest rates this week, but profit-taking pulled it back to 46.39. Last Friday's finish was 46.30 to the US dollar.

PAL to exit receivership in October

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES (PAL) EXpects to get out of receivership earlier than expected in October due to improved finances, according to PAL president Jaime Bautista.

"The airline will come out of receivership much sooner than its original year-end target and continue to look seriously at financing options to further improve its capitalization," Bautista said in a statement following the stockholders' meeting of PAL Holdings Inc. of the Lucio Tan group of companies, which owns 84.7 percent of the airline.

Bautista said that PAL's receiver recommended the move to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) last Friday, citing the airline's successful implementation of its rehabilitation program.

PAL applied for rehabilitation in June 1998 due to massive financial losses attributed to labor problems and the adverse effects of the Asian currency crisis. A receiver has since been appointed to preserve the airline's assets and help nurse it back to financial health.

Bautista said that once PAL graduates from receivership, PAL Holdings will raise funds early next year, a move which may entail the issuance of new shares or the securing of loans.

PAL Holdings has tapped Macquarie Securities as its financial adviser to study options, including inviting investors into the company to partly fund the airline's refleeting program.

Bautista estimated that getting new planes will require roughly $1.4 billion— $400 million will be used to get seven Airbus 320s to be delivered until 2008; and about $1 billion for six Boeing 777s to be delivered between 2009 and 2011.

Meantime, Permanent Rehabilitation Receiver chair Renato Z. Francisco reported to the SEC that from March 15,1999 to Aug. 31 this year, PAL management has "faithfully complied with the payment of its outstanding debts."

Total payments to creditors during the period amounted to $1.95 billion in principal and interest, including $187 million in prepayments.

From a peak of $2.12 billion in 1999, PAL's debt as of Aug. 31, has gone down to $869 million.

Francisco also told the SEC that PAL has posted an operating income since the start of its amended rehabilitation plan in 1999, and registered net income for the past three fiscal years.

The significant improvement in PAL's financial condition was brought about mainly by the increase in the net yield for each revenue passenger kilometer and the overall increase in the number of passengers throughout the rehabilitation period.

"Indeed, PAL has established its financial stability and is in a position to continuously service its outstanding debt obligations and does not foresee any payment default to any of its creditors and suppliers even after the company exits from rehabilitation," the receiver said.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 17, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
73	38	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	56	56	55	55.5	743,400
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	63.5	64.5	63.5	64.5	222,100
935	630	China Banking Corp.	800	800	800	800	2,550
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	200,000
75.5	39	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company	51.5	51.5	51	51	4,365,700
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	48	48	47.5	48	50,200
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	63	63	63	63	500
39.57	14.78	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	23.25	23.25	23	23.25	493,700
90	49.5	Security Bank Corp.	69	69	68.5	68.5	86,400
66	42.53	Union Bank of the Philippines	56	56	56	56	900
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.76	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3.95	4.1	3.95	4	195,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc	2	2.02	2	2.02	1,590,000
16.25	2.8	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.75	197,300
8.8	4.3	Filipino Fund Inc.	7	7	7	7	2,000
42	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	42	42	2,000
1,790.00	1,560.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,780.00	1,780.00	1,780.00	1,780.00	500
5	2.95	Nat'l Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.45	3.5	3.4	3.5	2,161,000
3.1	1	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc	1.92	1.92	1.9	1.9	70,000
2,310.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,310.00	2,310.00	2,310.00	2,310.00	730
1.94	1.3	Vantage Corp.	1.42	1.44	1.42	1.42	268,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	390,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	50,000
70	47.5	First Gen Corp.	65	65	65	65	460,400
92	48	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	74.5	75	74	74.5	259,000
15	8.8	Manila Water Company Inc.	14	14	13.75	13.75	179,100
105.45	16.82	Manila Electric Company	78	79.5	77.5	79.5	510,100
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6	6	5.9	5.9	28,963,000
6.5	3.8	Petron Corp.	5	5.2	5	5.2	7,611,000
14.75	6.6	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.8	163,000
1.9	0.95	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp.	1.22	1.24	1.22	1.22	962,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.1	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	150,000
2.95	1.66	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	551,000
61	33	Jollibee Foods Corp.	52	52	52	52	125,900
1.96	0.84	RFM Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	556,000
3.85	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	324,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. A	61	61	60.5	60.5	13,900
88	60	San Miguel Corp. B	62	62	61	61	1,115,900
0.66	0.22	Swift Foods Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	160,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.5	16.5	16	16.25	3,355,600
0.55	0.26	Vitarich Corp.	0.37	0.39	0.37	0.39	150,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
9.2	4.9	Holcim Philippines Inc	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	3,000
2	0.28	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc	1.12	1.12	1.08	1.12	2,917,000
		CHEMICALS					
[illegible]	[illegible]	Chemrez Technologies Inc	4.55	4.55	4.45	4.45	[illegible]
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	[illegible]	Picop Resources Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	[illegible]
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.96	A. Soriano Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	25,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.0975	0.0975	7,100,000
1.28	0.22	APC Group Inc.	0.63	0.73	0.63	0.73	27,020,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. A	2.8	2.85	2.8	2.85	161,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. A	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.01	45,000,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. B	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	23,000,000
9.7	4.95	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.6	515,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.016	0.014	0.015	198,600,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.1	5.2	5	5.1	3,418,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.24	2.28	2.22	2.26	2,779,000
590	375	Ayala Corp.	490	495	490	492.5	507,560
5.8	1.22	Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.65	3.7	3.55	3.55	5,919,000
6.9	1.06	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	27,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.5	275,000
3.55	1.2	House of Investments Inc.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	1,917,000
14.5	5.7	JG Summit Holdings Inc	9.5	9.6	9.5	9.6	8,502,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	50,000
0.8	0.205	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.44	0.53	0.44	0.53	100,000
11.5	1.1	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.65	4.7	4.6	4.7	1,517,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc	6.5	7	6.5	6.9	189,000
0.215	0.01	Pacifica Inc. A	0.17	0.175	0.16	0.165	487,850,000
0.75	0.175	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.38	1,100,000
452.5	217.7	SM Investments Corp.	347.5	350	347.5	350	199,560
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.32	0.38	0.32	0.38	45,870,000
1.6	0.9	South China Resources Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	22,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp	18	18	18	18	26,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.31	0.32	0.3	0.32	2,130,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.81	A Brown Company Inc.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.42	30,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.9	7.7	7.8	593,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.7	0.74	0.7	0.73	1,000,000
19.25	11.25	Ayala Land Inc	14.25	14.5	14	14.25	48,710,500
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.14	1,420,000
4.7	2.65	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	18,000
2	1.2	Cebu Property Venture & Dev't Corp. A	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	50,000
2.1	1.2	Cebu Property Venture & Dev't Corp. B	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	120,000
0.86	0.31	Crown Equities Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	520,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.41	0.44	0.41	0.42	240,000
0.99	0.5	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.67	0.68	0.66	0.67	4,660,000
0.47	0.05	Ever Gotesco Res. and Hold'gs Inc.	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	2,730,000
1.48	0.47	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.1	1,470,000
2.44	1.1	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.38	1.4	30,328,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.66	0.66	0.65	0.65	2,520,000
4.4	1.71	Megaworld Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.15	16,490,000
23	12.5	Robinson Land Corp.	17	17.25	17	17.25	799,100
5.9	1.5	SM Development Corp.	3.75	3.8	3.75	3.75	3,376,000
13.5	6.4	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.5	10,134,400
3.25	0.87	Shang Properties Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.6	2.6	89,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	560,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	520,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc	5.1	5.1	5	5	3,651,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	16	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	31.5	30.5	30.5	7,800
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc	9.3	9.5	9.3	9.5	197,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.2	1.2	[illegible]
1,445.00	1,030.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,320.00	1,320.00	1,315.00	1,320.00	20,450
2,820.00	2,130.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,695.00	2,705.00	2,690.00	2,705.00	268,740
7.9	4.45	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.9	400,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	9,500,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.6	8.6	8.5	8.6	399,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. A	15	15	15	15	4,000
2.9	1.48	Ionics Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	1,000
0.32	0.043	Island Info and Technology Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.19	16,120,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.2	1.24	504,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.049	20,200,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Grp Int'l. Inc	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	766,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.52	1.54	23,000
6.8	3.2	Asian Terminals Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	113,000
34.5	15.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	32	32.5	32	32.5	310,300
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	50,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.85	2.9	2.85	2.85	550,000
6	2.16	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	4.95	4.95	4.95	4.95	5,000
0.98	0.3	Premiere Entertainment Prod'ns Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
[illegible]	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	150,000
		EDUCATION					
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.95	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.94	Macroasia Corp	4.4	4.55	4.4	4.5	1,028,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	48,400
30	10	Paxys Inc	14	14	13.75	14	350,000
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	175,700,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	127,000
7	3.85	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.3	100,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	14.25	14.5	14.25	14.25	1,164,300
5	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	26,000
3.1	0.41	GEOGRACE Res. Philippines Inc.	1.84	1.88	1.8	1.86	80,180,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.32	69,790,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	9,670,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.029	0.03	0.029	0.029	354,100,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	38,000,000
30	1.2	NiHAO Minerals Res. Int'l Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.25	11.75	315,800
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	51,600,000
6.8	3.45	Philex Mining Corp.	6.3	6.7	6.3	6.6	10,101,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	32	32	31	31	3,000
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.02	1.06	1.02	1.04	1,430,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.18	1.22	1.18	1.22	1,455,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	4,540,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.024	0.025	0.023	0.024	704,300,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.025	0.026	0.024	0.026	393,600,000
11.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.9	10	9.9	9.9	124,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.024	0.026	0.024	0.026	340,100,000

AVERAGES				VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	870.56	UP	1.96	13,152,280	397,128,380.00
Industrial	4,436.09	DOWN	0.01	57,424,900	446,861,545.00
Holding Firms	1,849.76	UP	11.79	863,793,120	587,069,060.00
Property	1,437.91	DOWN	1.44	130,029,000	954,281,750.00
Service	1,611.78	UP	6.43	52,856,690	792,429,850.00
Mining & Oil	6,595.47	UP	169.11	2,236,426,100	315,882,575.00
All Shares Index	2,087.57	UP	0.83		
PSEi	3,307.43	UP	12.88		
		GRAND TOTALS		3,353,682,090	3,493,653,160.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

CURRENCIES

September 17, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.720565	1.000000	46.3320
Japan	Yen	0.006249	0.008672	0.4018
United Kingdom	Pound	1.446606	2.007600	93.0161
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.092532	0.128416	5.9498
Switzerland	Franc	0.605975	0.840972	38.9639
Canada	Dollar	0.699238	0.970403	44.9607
Singapore	Dollar	0.476753	0.661638	30.6550
Australia	Dollar	0.606230	0.841326	38.9803
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.912378	2.653998	122.9650
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.192146	0.266660	12.3549
Brunei	Dollar	0.475182	0.659457	30.5540
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000077	0.000107	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.022588	0.031348	1.4524
UAE	Dirham	0.196227	0.272324	12.6173
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.387800	64.2995
Korea	Won	0.000777	0.001078	0.0499
China	Yuan**	0.095870	0.133049	6.1644
Denmark	Kroner	0.134293	0.186372	8.6350
India	Rupee	0.017858	0.024783	1.1482
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.207059	0.287356	13.3138
New Zealand	Dollar	0.512894	0.711794	32.9788
Sweden	Kroner	0.108024	0.149916	6.9459
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.021783	0.030230	1.4006

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Sept. 14, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Sept. 14, 2007

REAL ESTATE SEMINAR & REVIEW
In preparation for the
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Choose from any sections below !! Time: 1:15 to 6:45 PM
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Sats: Max's Rest. Glorietta 2 Mkti –Sept 29, Oct 6, 13, 20, 27 & Nov 10
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Lower power rates for ecozone locators OKd

VERSATILE SHREDDER ... and SHIFTER
Innovation by:

AGRICULTURE Secretary Arthur C. Yap tries the shredder-shifter machine at the Agri and Aqua Techno-Demo Farm in Barangay Badio, Numancia, Aklan. The integrated farm mixes farming and fishery activities, as well as ornamental plants production and vermi-composting. It is being maintained by the local government and adopts organic farming system. Looking on are Ernesto Templonuevo, innovator of the machine and Numancia Mayor Elvirita Templonuevo.

Napocor, Meralco sign deal bringing rates down from ₱5 to ₱3.52 per kilowatt-hour

By Abigail L. Ho

STATE-OWNED NATIONAL POWer Corp. and the Lopez-led Manila Electric Co. have signed an agreement that will bring power rates down for locators in 10 industrial estates and three economic zones covered by the Meralco franchise.

In yesterday's signing ceremony, Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco said that from as much as P5 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) in the past months, ecozone locators will enjoy a generation rate of only P3.52 per kWh.

Under the agreement, Napocor will provide up to 2,500 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of power at the reduced rate yearly.

"If Meralco wants more, then we're more than willing to sit down with them again. The volume starts from 1,900 GWh to a maximum of 2,500 GWh," Napocor president Cyril Del Callar said.

Francisco said the special rate for ecozone locators could even go down to P3.49 per kWh and to P3.46 per kWh, if the demand volume would go up to certain levels.

While locators inside the 10 industrial estates and three ecozones within the Meralco franchise would be the first to benefit from the special rate, he said other entities could also avail themselves of the special rate provided they would meet some criteria.

To qualify, he said a company should be registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority and located within an economic zone. It also had to have an average monthly demand of at least 1 megawatt (MW) and a load factor of at least 80 percent.

In the case of the 10 industrial estates, he said all locators there would be entitled to the special rate—even those consuming less than 1 MW a month—as their load factors were placed at more than 80 percent.

The new rate would take effect upon the approval of the agreement by the Energy Regulatory Commission.

"We have been advised to submit a joint filing to the ERC, and we hope to get a provisional approval in the next few days. We hope to start implementing it by Sept. 26, or the October billing cycle of Meralco," Francisco said.

In the meantime, Semiconductor and Electronic Industries in the Philippines Inc. (Seipi) chair Arthur Young said the new ecozone rate would surely help boost investments in the economic zones.

One of the concerns of businesses wanting to locate in the country, he said, was the high cost of power.

"The lower rate will help make (the country and the economic zones) more attractive than before," he said.

Many of those that would benefit from the lower ecozone rate were members of Seipi.

Neda signs ₱30.2-M farm program deal

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC and Development Authority has signed a memorandum of agreement for a P30.2-million farm program, which involves the dissemination of conservation farming technologies.

Dubbed as the National Program for Sustainable Upland Farming through the Establishment of Conservation Farming Villages (CFVs), the project will put up "Barangay Sagip Saka" in selected land degradation hotspots in the country.

Putting up model CFVs is seen to enhance the transfer of conservation farming technologies and practices, anchored on participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation processes at the community level, the Neda said in statement.

Implemented by the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development, the program will be funded by the Kennedy Round 2 grant through the Neda Productivity Enhancement Program.

According to Neda Deputy Director General Rolando G. Tungpalan, the Neda PEP is envisioned to increase agricultural productivity and to serve as a knowledge dissemination tool.

"How do we propel, if not generate, more meaningful growth in agriculture? This is where we think KR2 can make a meaningful contribution," he said.

In the meantime, PCARRD deputy executive director Danilo Cardenas said the CFVs project "marks the beginning of a long journey for the implementation of an integrated approach for a sustainable upland management and development."

He noted that the science and technology sector has been advocating for measures to address the adverse effects of natural catastrophes such as floods and landslides.

"We look forward to the time that sustainability of our natural resources will be achieved, where no erosions will occur, no landslides, and no flooding. This is the core motive of our project—to save the land and eventually improve the lives of millions," he added.

The CFVs project is among the latest batch of KR2 funding recipients.

Twelve other beneficiaries from this batch cover 10 regions in the country, getting a total of P12.6 million. The first two batches of KR2-funded projects amounted to some P99 million.

Amy Remo

TARGET REMAINS

Corn output seen growing by 15.5% in second half

By Amy R. Remo

CORN PRODUCTION IS EXPECTED TO increase by 15.5 percent to 4.018 million metric tons in the second half of 2007 despite a prolonged dry spell, said an agriculture official.

Last year, corn production in the second half reached 3.478 million metric tons, of which 1.985 million MT were yellow corn while 1.492 million MT were white corn.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Dennis Araullo said that even with a prolonged dry spell, the Department of Agriculture was keeping its second semester target because new areas in Visayas and Mindanao would be used for the quick turnaround planting program.

Araullo, who is also the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani National Corn Program director, said yellow corn production was seen to reach 2.493 million metric tons and white corn, 1.525 million metric tons.

According to GMA-Corn Program estimates, the drought-hit Cagayan Valley is expected to deliver 703,617 metric tons or 17.5 percent of the corn supply in the second half.

Nondrought areas in Central Mindanao is expected to harvest 827,078 metric tons; Northern Mindanao, 705,295 metric tons; the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, 528,047 metric tons; the Davao Region, 273,565 metric tons, and the entire Visayas, 395,579 metric tons.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap earlier expressed "cautious optimism" on the growth of agriculture sector, following the drought that struck rice- and corn-producing areas of Luzon.

He placed the corn sector's full-year growth at 2.5-3 percent if dry spell would persist until December.

For this reason, the DA has been actively implementing measures to combat the adverse effects of the prolonged dry spell.

The GMA-Corn Program earlier released P56 million for the distribution of 32,657 bags of hybrid corn seeds.

It has also released a total of P26.21 million for the installation of 125 shallow tube wells in corn-producing areas nationwide; distributed four mechanical corn dryers, 58 mechanical corn shellers and 42 units of 4 x 4 tractors, and constructed 28 multi-purpose drying pavements.

Araullo said the DA had also distributed 114,322 seed bags to corn farmers as of June this year under the GMA-Corn Program's Production Enhancement Project.

Two post-harvest processing and trading centers were also put up in North and South Cotabato where the DA is carrying out the quick turnaround planting program to offset corn production losses.

These centers were designed to ensure the continuous supply of quality corn and provide farmers a venue for marketing their grains.

Feli to raise funds via 5-yr notes issuance

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PROPERTY FIRM FIL-ESTATE LAND INC. said it would issue $25 million worth of five-year convertible notes due 2012 to raise funds for its ongoing projects.

In a disclosure, Feli said it had signed an agreement for the convertible bond facility with Lim Asia Arbitrage Fund Inc. (the original bondholder), Lim Advisors Ltd. (the arranger), Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp. (the trustee) and Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc. Trust Banking Group (paying, transfer and conversion agent).

Convertible bonds represent quasi-debt instruments which can be converted into company shares of stock within the conversion period.

The facility tapped by Feli allows the conversion of the bonds into new shares within five years at a rate of P1.50 per share.

The annual fixed interest or coupon rate of the bond is 4 percent, with an intended yield-to-maturity of 14 percent in the event that the notes are not converted by the holders within the five years.

Feli also said the first $12.5 million of the $25 million worth of bonds would be offered to Lim Asia Arbitrage Fund via a private placement. The remaining $12.5 milion worth of bonds will be issued to other investors in minimum increments of $100,000.

A greenshoe option of up to $12.5 million will allow Feli to issue additional notes under the same terms and conditions within 2007, provided that the total notes issued do not exceed $25 million.

Feli said the notes would be issued upon the signing of the facility although no specific date was disclosed.

GOINGS-ON

Investment meet in Manila

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE PRESIDENT Francis Lim joins the list of international financial executives who will be speaking before the 2007 Pacific Region Investment Conference to be held in Manila on Oct. 18 and 19 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel.

Gerard A. Cruz, chair of the association, said the conference, which would focus on education and information, was expected to be attended by 300 delegates.

Lim will talk about the PSE Securities Borrowing and Lending Program.

Apafs is a nonprofit educational and charitable association founded by representatives from public and private institutional funds in Asia Pacific.

Sybase annual user conference

Developers, database administrators, IT managers, sales professionals and executives from around the world met in Las Vegas for the annual Sybase Inc. TechWave User Training and Solutions conference recently at Las Vegas' Mandalaya Bay Resort and Casino.

This year's Sybase conference focused on the next phase of the company's Unwired Enterprise Strategy, which called for the simplification of the development of mobility solutions to reach beyond the enterprise to the consumer.

Nine delegates from the Philippines -- led by Sybase Philippines professional services director Abelardo Talusig and account manager Michelle Hallare--attended the conference.

Court drops case against GQI foreign, local execs

THE QUEZON CITY REGIONAL Trial Court has dropped charges of syndicated estafa and ordered the lifting of arrest warrants against top executives of GoldQuest International Ltd. (GQI), a numismatics company.

In a three-page order dated Sept. 10, 2007, QC RTC Branch 219 presiding Judge Bayani Vargas upheld earlier findings by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez that there was no basis in indicting GQI executives led by Malaysian businessman Vijayeswaran Vijayaratnam and his Filipino partners Tagumpay Pablo Perez Kintanar, Joseph Luis Eleuterio Tomacruz Bismark and Donna Marie Glenn Imson.

Following the QC court's favorable ruling, Interpol Philippines wrote to Interpol Lyon seeking the immediate withdrawal and removal of the Interpol Red Notices lodged against the GQI executives. This was duly complied with, leading to the withdrawal of the Interpol Red Notices against them on Sept. 14, 2007.

The petition to withdraw the information against the GQI executives was filed by prosecutor Jennifer Cabanban-Ong last Aug. 23, 2007. It was endorsed by Assistant Prosecutor Arthur Malabaguio and approved by Quezon City Prosecutor Claro A. Arellano. On Sept. 3, 2007, State Prosecutors Rolando G. Ramirez and Philip L. dela Cruz subsequently filed a petition to lift the arrest warrants.

PNOC unit to complete jatropha research in Nov.

PNOC ALTERNATIVE FUELS Corp., A subsidiary the Philippine National Oil Co., will complete in two months its research on what variety of jatropha to propagate in the country.

"Wide-scale scientific work on jatropha is being done by PNOC-AFC, concerned government agencies and the academe. There is an ongoing study to find out which is the best variety of jatropha that can be planted and is suitable in various parts of the country," PNOC-AFC president and chief executive Peter Anthony Abaya said.

"And while studies are ongoing, we encourage private initiatives in the propagation of varieties of local provenance. Test, learn and build confidence," he added.

In an earlier interview, he said PNOC-AFC had spent nearly $3 million for its research and development efforts.

For the nurseries alone, he said the company had spent about P52 million, or more than a third of what it had spent so far on R&D.

"We're still undergoing provenance testing. We've planted various varieties to test their behavior and their yield. Most likely, we'll use one of the varieties present in Mindanao and in Palawan," he said.

He explained that PNOC-AFC's R&D team, together with its partners at the Department of Science and Technology, had planted six to seven jatropha varieties. From these, the three best varieties would be recommended for propagation in planned plantations.

The local jatropha varieties that PNOC-AFC had already tested included those found in General Santos City, Davao, Palawan, Batangas, Laguna, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Camarines Sur and Sorsogon.

"We're not being too aggressive in implementing the project because we want to be really careful. Jatropha plantations and refineries require huge investments, so we don't just want to plunge into this without being sure that the variety we'll propagate will produce the highest yield," Abaya said.

"We're very sure about the potential of jatropha. What we're trying to be sure of now, through our R&D efforts, is what variety is best for propagation," he added.

Former Agriculture Secretary William Dar had expressed reservations about the use of jatropha as a biodiesel feedstock, saying there was no assurance that this was a viable proposition.

"It's good PNOC-AFC is investing in R&D, particularly in testing various lines found in the country and even varieties developed in other countries. We should enhance this because it will take at least four to five years after which you can ascertain which lines/varieties are suited to which part of the country," he said in an e-mail message to the INQUIRER.

Greenspan sees higher recession odds

GREENSPAN

NEW YORK—FORMER FEDeral Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan said the probability of a US recession was now slightly more than a third, after he, earlier in the year, put the chances at one-third, The Wall Street Journal reported in its online edition on Monday.

Greenspan said there was a "very large" inventory of unsold, newly built homes putting pressure on builders to sell them quickly, the Journal reported, citing an interview with him.

As a result, "we have the capability of far bigger price declines," which will pinch home equity, lead to more defaults on subprime mortgages and pressure consumer spending, Greenspan said, according to the Journal.

Greenspan, who stepped down as chair of the Fed in January 2006 after more than 18 years at the helm of the US central bank, is giving interviews to promote his memoir, "The Age of Turbulence: Adventures in a New World," which is being published on Monday.

In the Journal interview, Greenspan said he had put the odds of a national decline in housing prices at less than 50-50, at least until a couple of months ago, based largely on the experience of Britain and Australia.

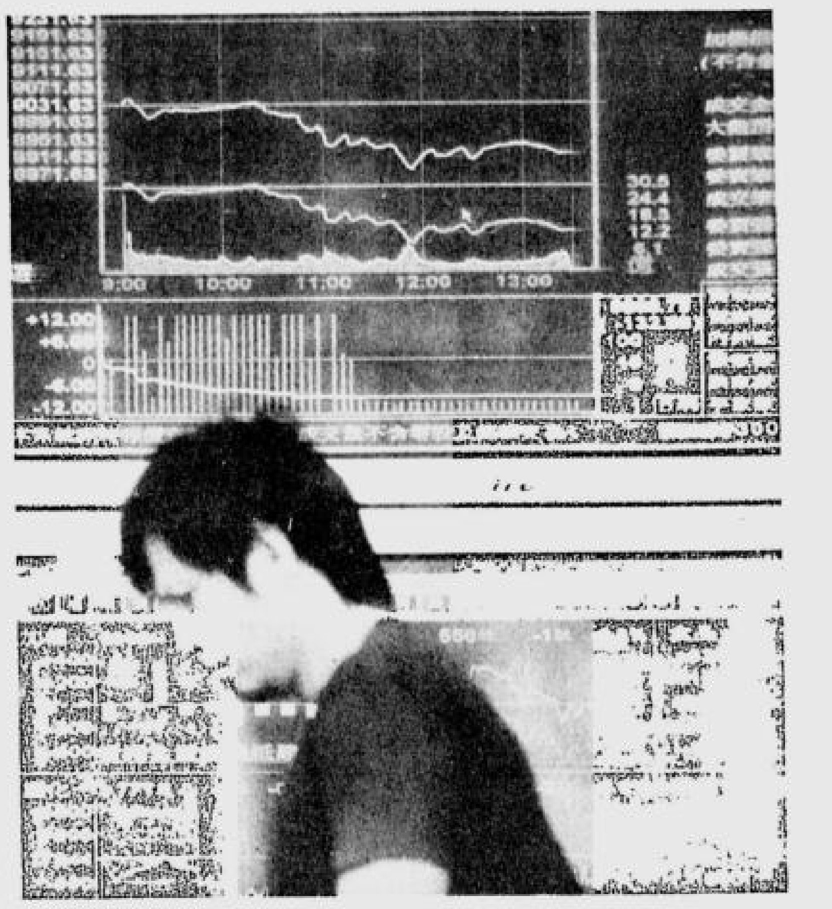
In another interview, Greenspan said that his successors at the US central bank should be cautious about cutting interest rates because of inflation risks, and he forecast home prices will drop further.

Greenspan said the Fed should be careful not to cut rates too aggressively because the risk of an "inflationary resurgence" is greater now than when he was chair, the Financial Times reported.

Greenspan said the US housing slump is likely to deepen more than many analysts expect, with home prices falling by at least a "large single-digit" percentage amount and perhaps by a double-digit percentage, he said.

Greenspan added that the possibility the housing slump will cause consumers to reduce spending makes it a particularly tricky challenge for policy-makers. *Reuters*

Wall St waits for Fed decision



A PEDESTRIAN walks by a market monitor in Taipei. Taiwan share prices closed 1.46 percent lower due to profit taking, dealers said. AFP

NEW YORK—WALL STREET'S wait is up: The Federal Reserve meets this week to decide what to do about interest rates.

However, investors might want to keep in mind that today's decision may end up raising as many questions as it answers.

The stock market plunged from record highs this summer on fears about souring home loans and excessive leveraged debt strangling corporate and economic growth. Since then, the big question on Wall Street has been: Will the Fed finally lower interest rates? Today, investors will find out.

No matter what the outcome, the stock market could be in for a wild ride.

Like many investment strategists, Bob Doll of BlackRock Inc. believes Fed policy-makers will lower rates by a quarter-point rate and alter their assessment of the economy—particularly given a decline of 4,000 jobs in August and weakening retail sales. But, he added, even if market gets its rate cut, the next day the market will probably ask: Now what?

"I'm not even sure good news from the Fed means we're out of the woods in terms of volatility," Doll said.

With all of the recent weak economic data, many investors have been crossing their fingers for a half-point rate cut, a move Swiss Re chief US economist Kurt Karl said policy-makers are probably loathe to make. "I don't think they want to give the market everything it wants. It's a very difficult situation."

Moreover, some experts argue the Fed may not go through with a rate cut at all, because the central bank, which has not reduced the benchmark fed funds rate since 2003, wants to avoid being viewed as bailing out investors.

Plus, the dollar has fallen to an all-time low versus the 13-nation euro, the price of crude oil is in record terrain, and the Dow Jones industrial average is only 4 percent below the all-time high of 14,000.41 it reached in July.

Last week, the major stock indexes fared well; a good deal of the gains came from high expectations of a rate cut, but some were also due to positive corporate news and an apparent return to normalcy in the market for commercial paper—bonds that companies sell for quick cash.

The Dow ended up 2.51 percent; the Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 2.11 percent; and the Nasdaq composite index rose 1.42 percent.

Ultimately, the Fed's two main concerns are core inflation—which strips out food and energy prices, and has been easing recently—and the economy, which is at a greater risk of dipping into recession if the Fed doesn't make a rate cut, Karl said.

"Is it a bailout, or a protection of the economy? You can interpret it both ways," he said.

Karl said it's not the Fed's job to worry about the dollar, except for how it may affect the economy.

A weak dollar makes imported goods more costly for Americans, and discourages foreign investors from buying dollar-denominated assets like US Treasury bonds. But it boosts exports and benefits companies who pull in a chunk of their revenue from overseas.

Another reason the Fed's rate decision Tuesday might not totally placate investors is that there's a flood of important data pouring in this week with the potential to stir up more jitters about the economy and future Fed policy: Notably, August prices for producers and consumers, August housing starts, and weekly jobless claims.

Most economists anticipate very little change in core prices, ongoing sluggishness in housing and an uptick in jobless claims.

Also, the major investment banks—Bear Stearns, Lehman Brothers, Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs—release their third-quarter earnings this week.

Wall Street will be poring over the reports to see if the banks' balance sheets held up during August's credit squeeze and stock market plunge.

And furthermore, even if the Fed does exactly what the majority of investors want, predicting its next move will continue to be Wall Street's favorite game.

According to BlackRock's Doll, "A preoccupation with what the Fed is up to is here to stay for some time." *AP*

WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE

Oil prices fall to $78 on profit-taking

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES DROPPED yesterday to extend the previous session's decline as traders sold crude contracts to lock in profits.

Light, sweet crude for October delivery lost 51 cents to $78.59 a barrel in Asian electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midmorning in Singapore.

The contract on Friday fell 99 cents to settle at $79.10 a barrel—the first decline in 10 sessions—despite setting a new intraday record of $80.36 a barrel.

Energy investors were watching for the outcome of a meeting of the US Federal Reserve Tuesday when the central bank's chair Ben Bernanke and his colleagues will determine their next move on interest rates, analysts said.

Some energy investors had been worried that credit tightness resulting from problems in the US mortgage industry is spreading to other sectors, which could curb demand for oil and gasoline.

Over the short term, a rate cut would provide an important psychological boost. It could make investors, businesses and others less inclined to clamp down or make drastic changes in their behavior that would hurt the economy.

Shum said crude futures were declining Monday on profit-taking and the reduced threat of tropical storms on key oil and gas infrastructure in the Gulf of Mexico.

Oil's rapid rise from $69 a barrel less than a month ago has been propelled by falling US oil inventories, concerns about growing demand and speculative buying by large investment funds.

Several analysts are now sounding alarms, arguing that there are no fundamental reasons supporting oil's rally.

In London, October Brent crude fell 24 cents to $75.98 a barrel on the ICE futures exchange.

Heating oil futures lost 0.68 cent to $2.201 a gallon (3.8 liters) while gasoline futures fell 1.04 cents to $2.026 a gallon. *AP*

Bargain hunting pulls up gold prices

SINGAPORE—GOLD GAINED ON bargain hunting on Monday, staying within sight of a 16-month high of $717 an ounce struck last week with expectations running high for the US Federal Reserve to cut interest rates.

Spot gold rose to $710.50/711.20 an ounce from $707.30/708.10 an ounce late in New York on Friday as the euro held within striking distance of last week's all-time highs around $1.3927.

"My gut feeling is when the dust really starts to settle in this subprime issue, gold will be even more attractive as an asset which is not really subject to a credit crunch," said Darren Heathcote of Investec Australia in Sydney.

"It's holding onto its safe haven status for the time being. Physical buying is still relatively strong," he said.

Gold, used in jewelry and as an investment tool, has rebounded around 10 percent from a seven-week low reached in mid-August. It hit a low of $641.10, when investors sold gold to raise cash to cover margin calls on losses triggered by a meltdown in the US subprime mortgage market.

"I guess $720 is definitely the topside. If we want to see the price hitting $800, which is possible, we need to clear the psychological levels of $720 and $730," said a dealer in Singapore.

Gold hit an all-time high of $850 an ounce, fixed in London on Jan. 21, 1980.

The euro dipped to $1.3858 on Monday but hovered near last week's all-time highs around measured against a basket of major currencies, the dollar touched a 15-year low of 79.30 last week before bouncing modestly to 79.72. *Reuters*

Thai economy lags in SE Asia

BANGKOK—ONE YEAR AFTER THAIland's coup, the kingdom's economic growth ranks among the lowest in Southeast Asia as domestic demand and investment have slumped due to political uncertainty, analysts said.

The economy is expected to rise over 4 percent this year, far below average growth of 5.6 percent in the region led by Indonesia, Singapore and booming Vietnam, according to the Asian Development Bank.

Political turmoil has gripped Thailand since early 2006, when protests erupted demanding the resignation of prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was accused of abuse of power and corruption.

But last September's bloodless coup, which toppled Thaksin's government, failed to end the political deadlock and instead pushed the nation into deeper uncertainty, slowing already wobbly economic activities, analysts said.

"The Thai economy was already heading for a slowdown before the coup, but things got worse after the coup," said Kitti Nathisuwan, a senior economist at Macquarie Research Equities in Bangkok.

"Private consumption and private investment deteriorated further because people were very uncertain about the future. Political uncertainty was the biggest negative factor for the economy," Kitti said.

The army-installed government did little to spur growth, analysts said.

Sriyan Pietersz, head of research at JP Morgan Securities Thailand, said the junta's priority was not the economy but the passage of an army-backed constitution in the kingdom's first-ever referendum.

"The focus has been on getting the constitution done in as short a time as possible. So there was not a broader focus on the economy," he said.

Thai voters approved the charter in August, paving the way for post-coup elections in December.

Sukhbir Khanijoh, a senior economist at Kasikorn Securities in Bangkok, said he was hopeful that the Thai economy would pick up after the December polls.

The junta's economic policies took a disastrous start with implementation of controversial capital controls, which caused the biggest-ever one day drop in the Thai stock market in December 2006.

The capital measures, which were aimed at halting the Thai baht's rise, were seen as a steep tax on equity investments, prompting investors to dump shares.

Facing stock losses worth a staggering $23 billion, the central bank was forced to ease the controls for equities and property in an embarrassing policy U-turn.

Even when the baht hit 10-year highs against the dollar in July, pressuring growth of exports, the key driver of the economy, investors were hardly impressed by government measures aimed at weakening the local unit, he said.

Under the schemes, ordinary Thais can open US dollar-denominated bank accounts with deposits worth up to $100,000 and Thai firms are allowed to keep foreign currency revenues for a longer period.

But what really pressured the baht to more than 34 to the dollar from a 10-year-high of 33.2 in early July was foreign capital flight sparked by the US housing loan crisis, not the government's measures, analysts said. *AFP*

Female purchasing power helps balance China's economy

SHENZHEN, CHINA—WAITing for a friend in Shenzhen's plush Kingglory Plaza, Chen Jing, 25, admires her new red Nokia mobile phone.

Complete with 3G and MP3 features, the phone cost just over 3,000 yuan ($400)—Chen's entire monthly wage.

But she's more than pleased with her purchase.

"It looks really good," she says.

Extravagant spending perhaps, but female consumers like Chen are spurring much-needed growth in Chinese consumption and helping offset the country's high savings rate, a source of tension with its trading partners.

"Urban women consumers will be spending much of their hard-earned cash on personal travel and related cultural and recreational activities, dining out, shopping, as well as buying cars and pursuing urban leisure lifestyles," Yuwa Heidrick-Wong, economic adviser to MasterCard International, said.

Olympic boost

Their spending will help determine which foreign brands succeed in China.

Credit Suisse cites luxury goods firms LVMH, Christian Dior and Valentino among its top picks along with watch maker Swatch Group as well as Nokia and Coca-Cola Co.

China's retail sales rose 15.7 percent in the first eight months of this year, reflecting rising incomes and urbanization.

Household consumption, however, is the lowest of any major economy.

It fell to 36.4 percent of gross domestic product in 2006 from 37.7 percent in 2005, when the comparable figures for the United States and India were 70 percent and 61 percent.

The downtrend is now new: In 1990, China's ratio was 49 percent.

That makes China too dependent on investment, which risks overheating, and exports, whose share of GDP has doubled in the past decade to 40 percent—more than twice that of the United States and Japan.

Reduced reliance

If China consumed more, imports would rise, narrowing a ballooning trade surplus.

Reduced reliance on exports, moreover, would make the economy less vulnerable to global economic shocks.

CLSA sees the US economy—China's biggest trading partner—tipping into recession late this year, causing China's economic growth to slump to around 5 percent in the second half of 2008 from an estimated 11.5 percent for all of 2007.

DBS's Leung disagrees: Pending interest rate cuts will shore up the US economy and the Beijing Olympics will help boost China's retail sales by 18 percent in 2008, he says.

That's still relatively weak given that exports and investment are surging by 20-30 percent annually. But analysts say there is no quick fix.

"If retail sales grow any faster China will have an overheating problem because the economy is already expanding by 11 percent and investment is growing by 20-30 percent," said Tim Condon, Asia economist at ING Financial Markets in Singapore.

High savings rates reflect job insecurity at restructuring state companies, shaky welfare protection and—in boomtowns like Shenzhen—homebuyers' need to keep up with soaring property prices.

Outside Kingglory Plaza, George Clooney grins benevolently from an Omega watch advert. But even he was having difficulty persuading men in the mall to spend one recent Sunday afternoon.

Calvin Klein and Hugo Boss have "sale" signs across their windows, but men in the mall mostly sit around checking mobile phones or playing with their children.

Born to spend

If young women seem more financially carefree, it could be because rapid growth has enabled them to break out of traditional roles.

Job opportunities for educated women in cities have never been better: Credit Suisse estimates average monthly wages among urban 20- to 29-year-olds jumped 34 percent in 2006, while average urban incomes grew 18 percent.

Donis Zhao, 26, a beauty consultant, says her mother, a doctor, keeps telling her to start saving, but she sees no need.

"I want to focus on my job. If I work very hard and learn a lot, I can earn more," she said. "It's not like when my mother was young 20 years ago and China was poor."

Gen Tang, a 20-something Hong Konger married to a Shenzhen native, says young Chinese women are too susceptible to advertising by foreign brands.

"They're buying for status," he said. "LV tells them: This is good and they buy it," he said, referring to Louis Vuitton. *Reuters*

OBITUARIES

LUIS DELGADO RODRIGO

September 12, 1934 - September 15, 2007

Luis has gone home to his Father.

His beloved wife, **Patricia**; and loving children, **Cherie** and **Bill Luteria**, **Raul** and **Nancy**, **Francis** and **Debbie**, **Michelle** and **Tags Maniquis**; and his grandchildren who gave him so much joy – **Jose**, **Isa**, **Pia**, **Juan**, **Antonio**, **Francisco**, and **Pablo**; request the reader to say a prayer to console those he has left behind.

Friends and relatives may condole with the family at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Mira-Nila Homes, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, 20th September, at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

One thing I ask of the Lord;
this I seek: to dwell in the Lord's
house all the days of my life..'
Psalm 27:4

JOSEPHINE GARCIA MANGUBAT

Peacefully returned to the home of our Father
on Sept. 16, 2007 at the age of 75

Her family...

SBAND	AQUILINO MANGUBAT JR. (†)
HILDRE	EILEEN
	CHUCK and JELLY
REN	PAULINA and CARLO

And other bereaved family members and relatives request friends, university colleagues and the community to say prayers for her eternal rest.

Her body lies in state at the Cebu Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes in Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City.

Interment will be on Saturday, Sept. 22, 2007 at Angelicum, Garden of Angels, in Canduman, Mandaue City after a 9:30 a.m. requiem Mass at the Cosmopolitan Imperial Chapel.

Pinaaalam sa mga kamag-anak at
kaibigan ang pagpanaw ni

EFIGENIA B. ANGELES

(Setyembre 21, 1917 – Setyembre 16, 2007)

Hinihiling ng kanyang mga anak, **Josefina** at **Edgardo Agravante**, apo, **Edward Joseph**, kapatid, **Julieta B. Asinas** at hipag, **Ofelia P. Bandoy**, mga pamangkin at apo na ipagdasal ang katahimikan ng kanyang kaluluwa.

Ang kanyang mga labi ay nakalagak sa Funeraria Nacional, Araneta Avenue, Setyembre 17–18 at ililipat sa Simbahan ng Immaculada Concepcion, Sta. Cruz, Laguna, Setyembre 19. Ihahatid sa huling hantungan sa Sta. Cruz Cemetery, Setyembre 20, 2007.

Alicia José Ramos

December 4, 1912 - September 15, 2007

Has joined her Creator and her loving husband, **Apolonio H. Ramos**, and her deceased brothers and sisters, **Nening & Encarnita Johnson**, **Rosita & Augusto Guerrero**, **Danding & Charing Diokno**, **Chochoy & Nena Laguardia**, **Zita & Eddie Hipolito** and **Luis "Booty."**

Her bereaved daughter **Carmina** & son-in-law **Warren**, her stepchildren, **Jessie & Caroline**, **Jun & Letty**, **Nene & Rey**, **Baby & Larry**, her sister-in-law, **Lita Caguiat**, all her nephews, nieces, grandchildren, great grandchildren and other relatives request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Chapel of Saint Therese of Lisieux, St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish Center, Magallanes Village.

Funeral Mass will be at 9:00 A.M., Wednesday, September 19, 2007 after which the body will be brought to Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City for cremation.

Death Notice

ESTELITA PARAISO ONDEVILLA

Died on September 14, 2007 at the age of 73.

Her body lies in state on Ope Street, Gumobatan, Albay.

Interment will be on September 19, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at Garden of Resurrection, Daraga, Albay.

CLASSIFIEDS

TUESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 18, 2007

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
(Head Office)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites interested general building and general engineering contractors with current Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License to apply for eligibility and to bid and if later found eligible, to bid for the project described below

Project Title	**Proposed Re-waterproofing of Roof Decks of the Office and Convention Hall Buildings of the BSP Davao Regional Office**
Scope of Work	Furnishing of all materials, labor, tools, equipment, technical supervision and other services and performing all operations necessary for the completion of the proposed **Re-waterproofing of Roof Decks of the Office and Convention Hall Buildings of the BSP Davao Regional Office** all in accordance with the approved plans and specifications and subject to the terms and conditions of the contract.
Project Location	Davao City
Approved Budget	Eleven Million Two Hundred Two Thousand One Hundred Ten Pesos (P11,202,110.00)
Source of Funding	BSP Corporate Funds
Contract Duration	: One Hundred Fifty (150) calendar days
Minimum Requirement (Criteria)	
PCAB License	**Registration Particulars of at least "Medium A" (Building and Industrial Plant or "Waterproofing")**
Contractor's Construction Experience	Should have completed within the last five (5) years (2002 to present) at least three (3) projects involving waterproofing and/or re-waterproofing of roof decks of offices and/or buildings. The prospective bidder's largest single completed similar contract must be at least five million six hundred one thousand one hundred pesos (P5,601,100.00) In case of a joint venture, submission of a valid joint venture agreement including the special PCAB license is required and each firm should be able to meet the above stated Contractor's Construction Experience. In addition, the joint venture must have previously completed at least two (2) similar construction projects of same magnitude as the proposed BSP project.
Certification of Satisfactory Performance	: Shall submit certificates of satisfactory performance from the client of the declared completed similar projects Contractors who have on-going project with the BSP shall submit a certificate of satisfactory performance issued by BSP. Contractors shall also submit a certificate of satisfactory performance issued by the Bank for its last completed BSP project
Net Financial Contracting Capacity	**At least Eleven Million Two Hundred Two Thousand One Hundred Ten Pesos (P11,202,110.00)** computed as 10 x (current asset less current liabilities) minus (value of all on-going contracts including awarded yet to be started)
or	
Credit Line or Cash Deposit Certificate	**At least One Million One Hundred Twenty Thousand Two Hundred Twenty Pesos (P1,120,220.00)**
Eligibility Statement Forms	
Cost of Forms	Five Hundred Pesos per set (P500.00/set)
Date of Issuance	: **September 17 to 24, 2007 / 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM**
Deadline of Submission	**September 28, 2007 / 9:30 AM**
Notice of Eligibility / Ineligibility	
Date of Issuance	**October 04, 2007 / 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM**
Bid/Tender Documents Issuance	: Shall be issued only to eligible contractors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Six Thousand Pesos (P6,000.00)
Date of Issuance	**October 04 to 05, 2007 / 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM**
Pre-Bid Conference	
Date and Time	: **October 12, 2007 / 9:30 AM**
Venue	: MR2A, 2nd Floor, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo St., Manila
Submission and Opening of Bids	
Deadline of Submission	**October 30, 2007 / 2:00 PM**

For inquiries, please call **BAC Secretariat – telephone no. 524-7011 local 3143**

The venue for the issuance and submission of accomplished eligibility statements and bid documents is at the BAC Secretariat, Room 204, 2nd Floor – Five Storey Building, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo St., Manila.

The schedule for issuance of notice of eligibility/ineligibility up to the deadline of submission of bids may be subject to change.

The provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations shall govern relative to the bidding and award of contract including its implementation.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI–September 18, 2007)

Job Opportunity

Information about Job
Opportunities tonight 6pm-8pm
(other dates are possible)
If you are interested please
contact Mr. Pulfer
e-mail: lr-philippines@hispeed.ch
Cel: 0927 940 6850

INVITATION TO BID

The Regional Development Council-Cordillera Administrative Region (RDC-CAR) invites interested parties to bid for the project **"Preparation of Cordillera Investment Promotion Collaterals"** with the following components: (a) Development, Printing and Packaging of Regional Investment Brochure; and (b) Enhancement of Existing English DVD and its Translation to Chinese Mandarin, Spanish and Japanese Languages.

To qualify, submit letter of intent, company profile, and at least 2 samples of previous works to the address listed below, not later than 28 September 2007. Terms of Reference shall be released to qualified bidders starting 1 October 2007, at 1:00 PM.

Investment Promo Materials Project
The Regional Development Council-CAR
c/o National Economic and Development Authority
Botanical Garden Leonard Wood Road
2600 Baguio City, PHILIPPINES
Tel. No.: (074) 444-7144

(PDI–Sept. 18 & 23, 2007)

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JOB Market

Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

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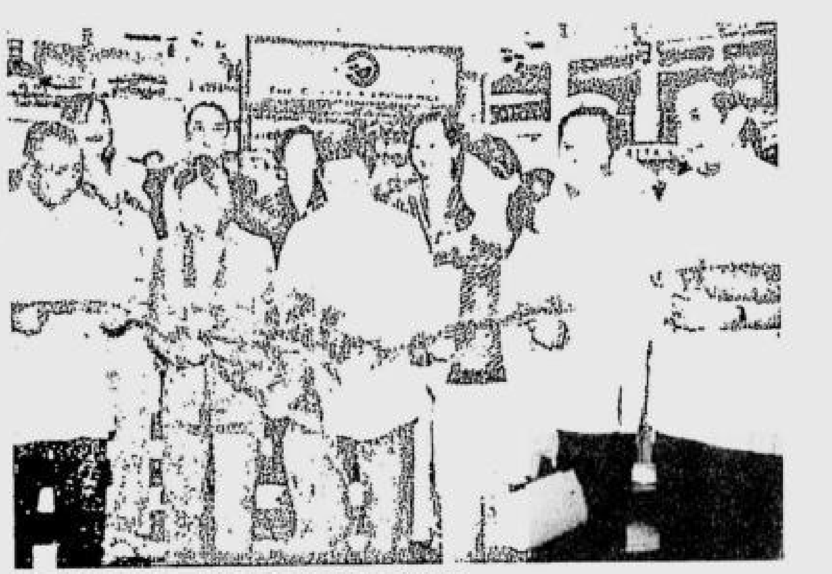
Makati:
892-5578; 811-4361;
811-4370
Kalaw:
528-0213; 527-3342
Megamall:
635-0219; 635-0220



HOUSING STAKEHOLDERS OPEN TRADE EXHIBITS

Top officers of government and private real estate sectors are shown during the opening of the housing trade exhibits at the Glorietta Activity Center, Ayala Malls, jointly held by the National Real Estate Association (NREA) and of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC). Shown cutting the ribbon formally opening the Housing Fair are Usec. Lucille P. Ortile (2nd from left), secretary general of HUDCC. Assisting from left: NREA Chairman Jose V. Manalad; Lawyer Joseph Peter Sison, president of NHMFC; NREA exec. vice president Gilda C. Lim, convention & exhibits overall chair; NREA national president Alejandro S. Mañalac and Architectscope editor Archt. Ricardo R. Poblete, convention & exhibits adviser. At the back, same order are, NREA trustee Emely S. Medina, Housing Fair Chair; Realtor Edwin Lisondra, convention & exhibits overall vice chair; VP-internal Lucia V. Ferrer, program vice chair; NREA secretary general Evelina V. Estrada and Malou Villados (hidden), Housing Fair vice chair.

More Classified Ads

Department of Labor and Employment-NCR
A23

National Food Authority
A23

OBITUARIES

Our Dearest Beloved Papa

Lt. Colonel Jose S. Consengco, Sr. (Army Ret.)

Peacefully joined his Creator on Sept. 16, 2007.

His beloved wife, **Clotilde Nazareno Consengco**,
his children, **Danny & Che-Che**, **Cindy & Jun**,
Cecilia & Iking, **Jing-Jing & Brenda**
grandchildren, **Chrissie**, **Miguel**, **Mizo**, **Gelo**,
Darence, **Luis** and **Paolo**
brothers, sisters, relatives and friends
request the pious readers to pray
for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state on Sept. 17 - 19, 2007
at Chapel C of Christ the King Church, Greenmeadows.

Interment will be at The Heritage Park, Bayani Road,
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City on Sept. 20, 2007.

"...with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God." (Colossians 3:16)

THE MISSIONARY BENEDICTINE SISTERS
St. Scholastica's Priory, Manila
announce the death of

SISTER PASCHALA (SUSANA) NATIVIDAD SANTIAGO, OSB

(May 24, 1921 – September 16, 2007)

in Baguio on September 16, 2007 at 10:00 in the evening. Interment will be at the City Cemetery on Tuesday, September 18, 2007 after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass at St. Scholastica's Chapel, Baguio Convent.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Aries Espinosa**

DM9 JaymeSyfu, one of the 5 most creative shops in the Agency of the Year

DM9 JAYMESYFU'S WORKS IN THEIR very first year of operations already earned them a finalist position in the Agency of the Year Best in Creative category. Other finalists were JWT, TBWA Santiago Mangada Puno, and BBDO Guerrero Ortega. The overall Best in Creative for 2006 was Ogilvy & Mather.

Eleven agencies had entries in the Creative category, which was based on the quality of creative ideas demonstrated in the agency's submitted body of work. It was interesting to note that the agency size doesn't count in this category. The body of work, consisted of the agency's 6 best ads, was judged for its consistency and quality of ideas -across media vehicles and across brands. Awards won in local; regional and global competitions helped in earning points for the work.

DM9 JaymeSyfu's 6 best ads were their work for Smart ("Father" TVC), McDonald's ("Good Kuya" TVC), Coppertone ("Shadow" Poster), Tower Records ("White" banner), Extraderm ("Peel off" Promo /POS) and a radio spot for Schering Plough's nasal decongestant Drixine ("Game show").

After the judging last month, judges were guessing which agency would make it to the top 5 most creative. Based on track records, BBDO, JWT, TBWA and O&M will surely be among the five. "The wild card kept everyone guessing. When our agency's name was called, we were simply ecstatic. Imagine, making it on the list in just one year?" DM9 chief creative officer Merlee Jayme added.

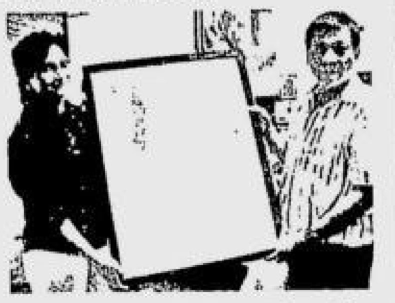
The members of the Jury for Best in Creative were Raul Castro (McCann), Richard Irvine (Leo Burnett), David Guerrero (BBDO), Melvin Mangada (TBWA), Teeny Gonzalez (DDB), Socky Pitargue (PC&V), Abby Jimenez (Jimenez Basic).

To be eligible in the Agency of the Year, an agency must be a fully accredited member of the 4As.

HP GOES 'HANDS ON' TO HELP KIDS WITH CANCER

HP PHILIPPINES AND HANDS ON MANILA (HOM) have organized a feeding program to lend a helping hand to dozens of kids staying at the Center for Health Improvement and Life Development (Child) House at the PCSO Complex, Quezon City. The Child House is a temporary home that provides free room and board for indigent patients from the provinces who have cancer or other dreaded diseases and who have no place to stay while undergoing medical evaluation and/or treatment. The Child House is run and facilitated by Paglipon ng Tao Mission-Ministry, a non-government organization that aims to help society's poorest and neediest members, especially cancer-stricken children and their families. 'The people who come to Child House have nowhere else to go. Many have sold everthing they own, even their properties in the provinces, just to pay for their childrens' medical treatment,' explained Dr. Erwin Francisco Estimo, Child House medical officer. 'We have about fifty kids here at any given time, all of whom are suffering from illnesses that require prolonged treatment or monitoring. Almost two-thirds of them are cancer patients.' 'We're thankful to HP and so many others who care and who have helped us meet the needs of of our patients,' said Paglipon ng Tao Mission-Ministry head Nonie Roa. Aside from the feeding program, HP also donated P25,000 worth of Sodexho gift checks to the Child House to help with groceries and other additional needs. Photo shows HP's April Maralit and HOM resource mobilization manager Claire Algarme (fourth and third from right, respectively) turn over the Sodexho gift checks to Paglipon ng Tao Head Nonie Roa, as parents, volunteers, and staff of Child House look on.

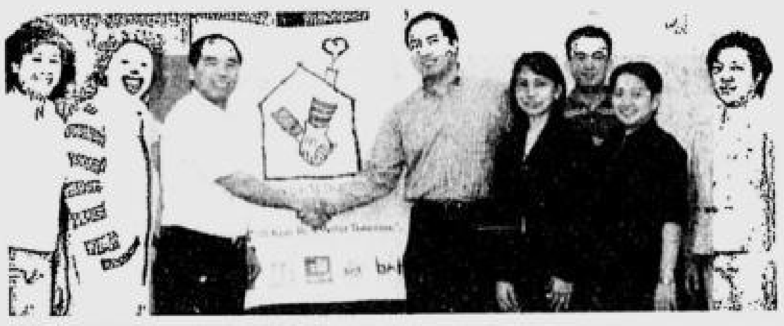
DAVAO CITY MAYOR RECEIVES ART PIECE



Davao City Mayor Rodrigo R. Duterte receives from publicist Mabel R. Guia the 'Iraq' protest art donation of the distinguished contemporary artist, Rome based Tomas Concepcion. Iraq, one of the art pieces in the Golden Homecoming Exhibit of the artist held in the city, will be displayed at the newly remodeled Davao museum. Guia, project director of Salida Filipina Corp – an arts, culture and education advocate in new media, presented the art exhibit together with the Italian Embassy recently.

BPO INTL ORTIGAS OFFICE INAUGURATION

BPO International inaugurated its new office in Ortigas July 26. Leading the team in welcoming the guests are the company's chair Francisco Dizon, its president and CEO Christopher Orcullo and chair of the executive committee Robert Cokeng. The company used to be an outsourcing unit of SGV & Co (a member practice of Ernst & Young global) until it became an independent entity in 2002. Hence, you can see current and retired partners from SGV gracing the occasion -- led by its chair and managing partner David L. Balangue. Clients and friends were there to join the celebration. It was a memorable occasion for the company as it celebrates another milestone in its quest to become one of the best if not the best local outsourcing provider in the country.



SMASH FOR A CAUSE

The 2nd Ronald McDonald House Charities' Corporate Badminton Tournament on Sept. 22 and 29 at Yonex Badminton Center has already raised P1.5M for RMHC's Bright Minds Read Program. Shown (from left): Ronald McDonald House Charities executive director Zonito Torrevillas, Ronald McDonald and McDonald's CFO and executive vice president Bing Bachoco thank the major sponsors: Coca-cola Company customer marketing director Herman Medina-Cue, McCormick Phils business manager elizabeth Sy, Havi Food Phils Inc team leader Michael Santos, Globe Telecom consultant enterprise business group Stephanie Chan and senior account manager, Globe Solutions sales Rachel Nepomuceno.

LAFARGE SUSTAINS GREEN CAMPAIGN

Republic Cement Corp-Norzagaray Plant, a Lafarge Associated Company (LAC), recently responded to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) Trees for Life Campaign by planting 1,000 hardwood trees and adopting a portion of the critically endangered Ipo Watershed in Norzagaray, Bulacan. Employee-volunteers from Lafarge's head office as well as its Republic Cement Corp. Bulacan Plant also joined the event in partnership with Hands On Manila Foundation, Manila Water Company, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), and the Norzagaray local government. Shown with the volunteers (middle) are Lizza Vicaldo, plant manager of Republic Cement Corp Norzagaray, and Joel Lacsamana, LAC vice president for corporate communications, presenting a narra seedling to a local Dumagat ranger at the watershed.

NEW BALANCE POWER RACE: NEXT LEVEL

New Balance and Planet Sports Inc (PSI) teams up with Clark Development Corp (CDC) to bring the New Balance Power Race: Next Level to be staged on Nov. 11 at Clark Freeport Zone. It will offer 10km and 25km race formats with open and age group categories. Deadline of registration is on Oct. 14. Participants can register at the following centers: New Balance-Glorietta 4, New Balance-Shangri-la, Planet Sports-Rockwell, Planet Sports-Greenhills, The Athletes Foot-Ermita, Signature Brands for Less-Subic. Shown are (from left): Noel Manakil - VP for finance, CDC; Bing Buenaventura - brand manager, New Balance; Danny de la Pena - GM, PSI; Anton Gonzalez - president, PSI; Liberato P. Laus - president/CEO, CDC; Eric Imperio - EMI Race technical director; Noemi B. Garcia - manager, Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office; Elen Santos - secretary, CDC; Frank Madlambayan - VP for operation and technical services.

ProductFILES

Unlock the secret of whiteness with Snowcaps

THERE'S A NEWEST AND MOST CONVENIENT way to get great looking and whiter skin in a more potent formula. Introducing SnowCaps, by taking one capsule at least once a day allows you to achieve the whiteness movie star has. Every capsule of SnowCaps contains 500mg Clinical Strength Reduced L-Glutathione and supported by Alpha Lipoic Acid and Vitamin C. The Clinical Strength Reduced L-Glutathione helps treat blood disorder and detoxifies the liver which is highly effective in reversing the metabolism of melanin that lightens dark pigmentation. It's the same process used in most clinic but in a capsule form. The result is as good as a complete treatment in a dermatologist but cost you less. SnowCaps can be bought in box or per capsule at reasonable price because whitening shouldn't be expensive so that everyone can wear white skin. SnowCaps is available in Mercury Drugs and all leading drugstores nationwide. For inquiries, text Vida Nutriscience hotline at 0927-9927000 or visit their website at www.snowwhitening.com.

My Book Pro Edition

WD'S MY BOOK PRO EDITION EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE with triple interface combines three leading external hard drive interfaces (FireWire 800, FireWire 400, and USB 2.0) on one drive for maximum performance and universal connectivity. Designed to work on both Macintosh computers and PCs, this drive includes powerful EMC Retrospect Express backup and recovery software, a unique Capacity Gauge LED, capacities up to 750 GB.

Live, study, succeed at UniverCity

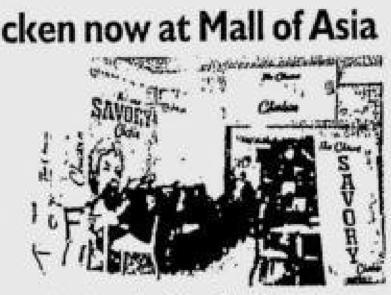
MAIN LOBBY

UNIVERCITY CONVENIENCE Flats, a residential condominium project of Step One Property Builders' Inc (Sopbi), one of the country's most progressive medium-rise condominium developers today, is aptly named because it is situated in the University Belt Area, specifically in Concepcion Aguila Street in Quiapo, Manila, and caters to students, employees and the upwardly mobile professionals who prefer to live close to schools and/or places of work. The project has studio and two-bedroom units, spacious parking slots, and provisions for telephone and cable lines. Five commercial units are also available at the ground floor. A one-bedroom model studio can accommodate as many as four persons. All units at UniverCity are very affordable with flexible payment terms. A 22-square meter studio unit, for example, is priced at only P1.2 million. The down payment of P200,000 can even be settled in six equal installments while the balance of P1 million is payable through Pag-Ibig, bank or in-house financing. For inquiries, call Sopbi at 891-3371, 891-5554, 891-5511 or 891-5551.

Igmaan: A seaside standout

ROWS AND ROWS OF GENERIC "PALUTO" restaurants greet you upon entering Seaside Complex at Macapagal Boulevard. Diners, especially first-timers, can get lost in the restaurant maze as they try and pick out which one of these dining places can offer the best in terms of quality, service and ambience. Entrepreneurs Bobby Demalata, Noriel Ricaforte and Lizza Arcilla-Ricaforte stand by this maxim when they created Igmaan (derived from "igma" which is a karay-a word for lunch so it literally means a place to have lunch) - a bright, cheery, post-modern "paluto" restaurant complete with a crystal chandelier to lend a stark contrast to the yellow and orange walls. Bobby stepped on the plate and came up with innovative dishes that wonderfully rounds off Igmaan's standout interiors and efficient service staff. Igmaan is open everyday of the week from 10 a.m. to 12 midnight and is located at the Seaside Complex along Macapagal Boulevard in Pasay City. Cooking charges range from P80 to P200 per kilo depending on the ingredients. For inquiries and reservations, you may call Bobby, a master in picking out the freshest fish, shrimps and crabs. He can be reached at 497-2690, 0928-7772547 or 0928-5059405.

The Classic Savory Chicken now at Mall of Asia



THE CLASSIC SAVORY CHICKEN recently opened its first branch at the SM Mall of Asia. The newly opened branch is located at the ground floor of the Entertainment Mall. Another branch also recently opened at the SM SuperCenter in Pasig. Introduced in 1950 by the Ting brothers, the Savory Chicken is known for its tasty, juicy and tender chicken. Aside from the Savory Chicken, the menu also includes other popular Chinese dishes. The third generation of the Ting family who launched the first Savory branch in Escolta are re-launching the Classic Savory Chicken so that the future generations can continue to savor this unique fried chicken and other specialties.

FILIPINO DOCTOR SPEAKS IN US MEDICAL CONFAB

Dr. Juan Sanchez, a Filipino plastic surgeon who wrote the books 'Oriental Rhinoplasty' and 'Asian Rhinoplasty, A Guide for Aesthetic Surgeons' recently delivered a talk with the topic 'Enhancement of the Asian Look' before an audience of US and Filipino doctors at the medical convention put up by the UST Medical Alumni Association of America in Las Vegas. Sixteen years into plastic surgery practice, Sanchez is a UST medicine graduate. He received his training in plastic and reconstructive surgery at Makati Medical Center and further training in aesthetic, craniofacial and microvascular surgery in Norfolk, Virginia in the US. He is currently a consultant in plastic surgery at Fe del Mundo Medical Center, Philippine Heart Center, Philippine Children's Medical Center and the AFP Medical Center.

AN AFTERNOON OF LOVE SONGS, POEMS AT LCCM

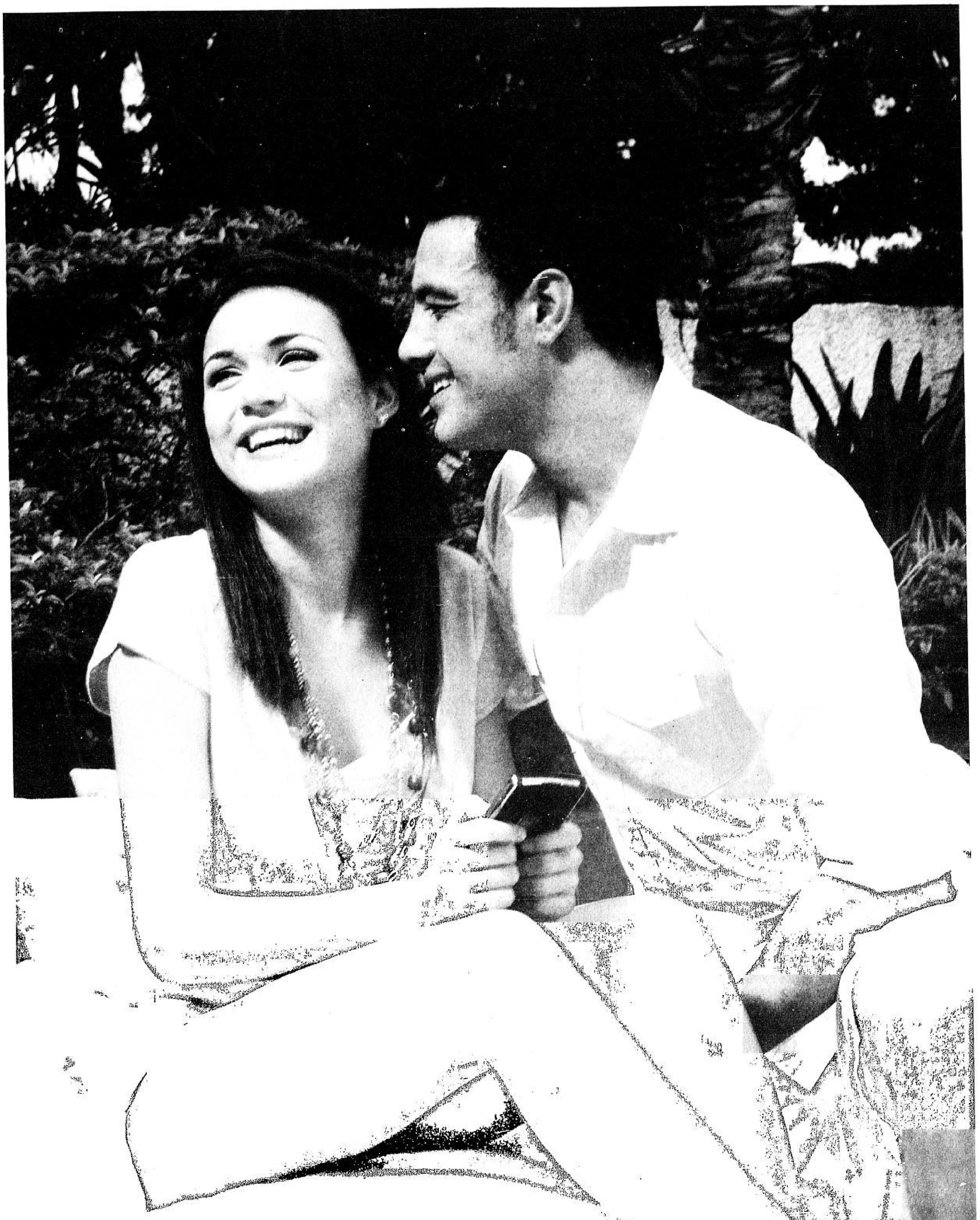
Candle light, beautiful music and rose petals strewn around the place, lend La Consolacion College Manila's Thai Café' , a romantic ambience during a special poetry reading session graced by the presence of Virgie Moreno, poet par excellence. The event, which was spearheaded by Lito Casaje, LCCM's director for performing arts was organized to get together the school's poetry lovers, both students and faculty, to share and bask in the magic and romance of reading poetry. The poetry performance is part of LCCM's program in enhancing culture and arts in campus and the cozy Thai Coffee Shoppe was a perfect venue for the affair.

BPI PARTNERS WITH KOREA'S WOORI BANK

The Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) is strengthening its stance in providing a better and a more dependable remittance service for OFW's in Korea when it recently entered into a special agreement with Seoul-based Woori Bank. Under the agreement, Woori Bank will officially be one of BPI's international correspondent banks and will facilitate remittance transactions for OFWs who wish to send money from Korea to their families here in the Philippines via BPI. Shown during the BPI-Woori Bank MOA signing: (seated from left) BPI senior vice-president Teresita B. Tan, BPI president Aurelio B. Montinola III, and Woori Bank International trade business head Sunkew Lee. Witnessing the signing of the agreement were BPI global remittance division's senior vice-president Raul D. Dimayuga, vice president Reinier C. Jeongco, and senior manager/marketing officer Melinda V. Dulay, together with Woori Bank' Bonshin Koo and Byung Yoon Ohe.

UNILAB SUPPORTS GMA KAPUSO FOUNDATION

Unilab, the largest and leading Filipino pharmaceutical company in the country through its Consumer Health (ULCH) Group recently pledged to provide support for GMA Kapuso Foundation projects. Led by Unilab consumer link group led by assistant vice president Jose Romana (extreme left), a ULCH team paid a courtesy visit to GMA-7 executive vice president for Kapuso Foundation Mel Tiangco (third from left) to explore areas of cooperation and support for their respective advocacies. Numerous activities were outlined, among them Unilab's support for the Kapuso feeding programs and medical missions. Other members of the Unilab team were Celia Caballero, consumer health senior manager for media (third from the right), Rodel Magsalin, consumer health manager for professional marketing (second from the right), and corporate affairs officer Raymond Santiago (extreme right). Also presen in the discussions were GMA Kapus executive director Manuel dela Fuent Jr. (second to the left)



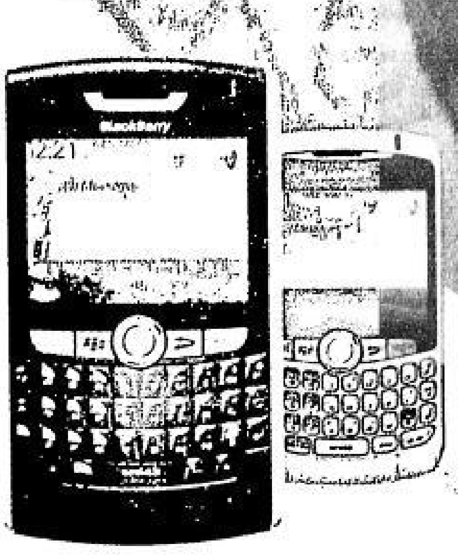
Guess what...The reason I can get away from the office so much nowadays is:

A. *I just bought the company and everybody wants me to find the "real me"...*

B. *I convinced HR to hire 20 new junior staff to do all my work, and I've also got a girl Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.*

C. **The Smarter BlackBerry**

The Smarter BlackBerry comes with full phone and PDA functions, Internet browsing and faxing, as well as real-time push email. You can now work as effectively out of the office as in it. Didn't we say it's smarter?



The Smarter BlackBerry.
You *really* wanna know me.

BlackBerry.

e-mail cbg@smart.com.ph / call: 511-2328

SMART

SMART Office-In My Pocket Solutions

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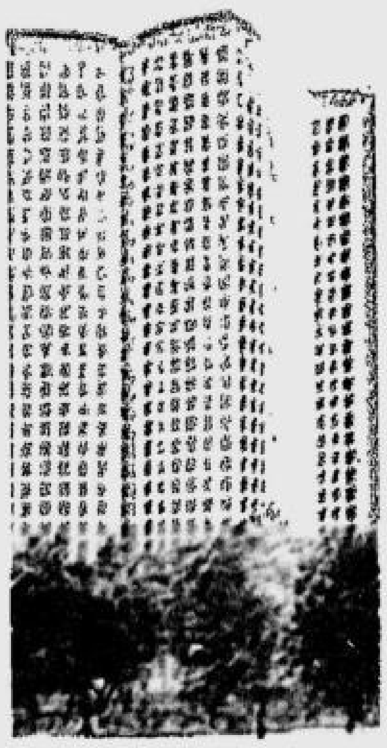
DESIGNER WHEY
America's #1 Protein Shake
✓ Builds Lean Muscle Mass
✓ Burns Body Fat Faster
✓ Strengthens immune System
✓ Develops Stronger Bones
✓ Promotes Healthy Aging
DESIGNER WHEY. Because you care for your health

A SAFE and better life for all Filipinos is the battle cry of Tobiano.

Putting food, water to the test

Pinky Tobiano is also alerting the media about cosmetics, toys and cheap generic medicines

AMBASSADOR Jose E.B. Antonio



MONTHLY monitoring of water is performed by Qualibet at Essensa and other buildings managed by Century Properties.

PINKY Yee

DR. WENCY Kiat

By Chelo B. Formoso

PINKY PE TOBIANO has been battling cancer for three years now, but this has not stopped her from starting what seems to be the fight of her life.

For a slip of a woman, and a cancer survivor at that, Tobiano is quite the woman warrior. Thank heavens for that because, otherwise, the public would never have confirmed that the water we have been using in Metro Manila is tainted with bacteria and fecal matter.

As to be expected, the two giant corporations supplying the metropolis with water went ballistic and vehemently denied that the water was tainted.

What for? Everyone always suspected there were harmful things in our water supply anyway, or why else have sales of bottled purified water been up? By coming out with the results of the water testing by her company, Qualibet Testing Services, Tobiano must be credited for making the public realize that the quality of the water we use in our homes is an issue too important to ignore.

The water that Maynilad and Manila Water are pumping into our households may be clean, even above standard, as they claim. "But that could be true only up to the meter," said Tobiano at a recent luncheon to alert the media against not only water contaminants but the unsafe contents in food, makeup and toy materials.

She cautioned that, from the meter, the water could also be contaminated with germs, lead and other substances that cause gastrointestinal diseases, skin infections, learning disabilities and even cancer.

For swimming, too

Suppliers therefore do not have the sole responsibility of safeguarding the water. Tobiano commended the Century Properties Group, one of the most trusted urban master planning and property management firms in the country, for its current project of monitoring water at its properties.

To ensure the health and safety of residents, Century Properties has hired Qualibet to test the water monthly in all of its buildings—54 of them—as well as in Canyon Ranch in Cavite.

"We are testing not only the water from the tap but also the water in the swimming pool," said Tobiano. And while most of the testings by Qualibet are done for hardly a fee, she noted that Century Properties was a paying customer.

"It's a small amount to pay for a service that gives you peace of mind," said Jose E.B. Antonio, chair of the Century Properties Group and also the Philippines' special envoy to the People's Republic of China.

According to Dr. Wency Kiat, a toxicologist from SLMC who served as a resource person during the forum, it is best to boil water for drinking.

Bad oil

In addition to water, Tobiano also alerted the media about dangerous substances in food, cosmetics, toys and cheap generic medicines now out in the market.

Trans fat in food was a major concern at the forum. It is when hydrogen is added to vegetable oil to increase the shelf life and flavor stability of foods that *trans* fat is formed. Like saturated fat and cholesterol, *trans* fat puts you at greater risk for coronary heart disease.

"There should be a warning on foods like there is a warning on cigarette packs," said Kiat. "It should say *trans* fat is dangerous to your health."

In her crusade against *trans* fat and for proper labeling of food, Tobiano has found an ally in the widely popular bakeshop Goldilocks.

Marketing director Pinky T. Yee reported that Goldilocks used "medical-grade sanitation procedures in all its production."

A food company that requires an extremely large volume of egg supply every day would do well to conduct tests for salmonella, other bacteria and all forms of infestation. This Goldilocks does.

Each manufacturing plant, she said, was equipped with ultraviolet light-air filters that eliminated 99 percent of all airborne bacteria in all food-handling areas. Yee added that strict standards also applied to packaging. Goldilocks also uses the latest techniques available for pest control.

But a bakeshop is a bakeshop is a bakeshop, right? Its products are made of sugar, butter, margarine and other ingredients that in recent years have been getting a bum rap as health wreckers.

Healthy bread

Well, not all products. Tobiano announced that Goldilocks was now making and selling Healthtinapay, sliced bread that was bromate-free, *trans* fat-free and cholesterol-free, as well as fortified with Vitamin A and Omega 3.

She added that Goldilocks' healthy bread would have on its packaging the Qualibet seal of assurance from Tobiano.

A chemist by education and consumer advocate at heart, Tobiano is tirelessly pushing for good nutrition and safe environment for Filipinos. She has collaborated with the Philippine Coast Guard in testing marine life. She is currently working with Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando in monitoring the water supply in all of the city's public schools.

Quality is better

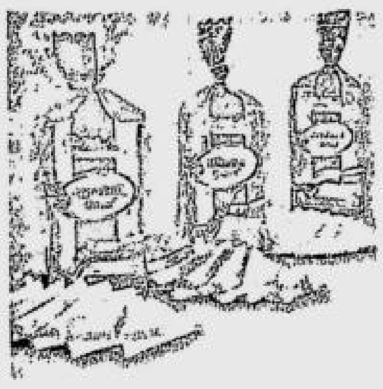
Tobiano established Qualibet, which is short for "Quality is better," in 2006 and staffed it with US-trained chemists, pharmacists, microbiologists and pathologists. The laboratory offers third-party testing of food, water, drugs, cosmetics and even animal feed. It also performs tests such as bacterial analysis, proximate analysis, nutrition facts, and minerals and heavy metals, among others.

Qualibet also conducts seminars and prepares modules for teaching proper food handling and maintaining a clean kitchen for restaurants and food manufacturers.

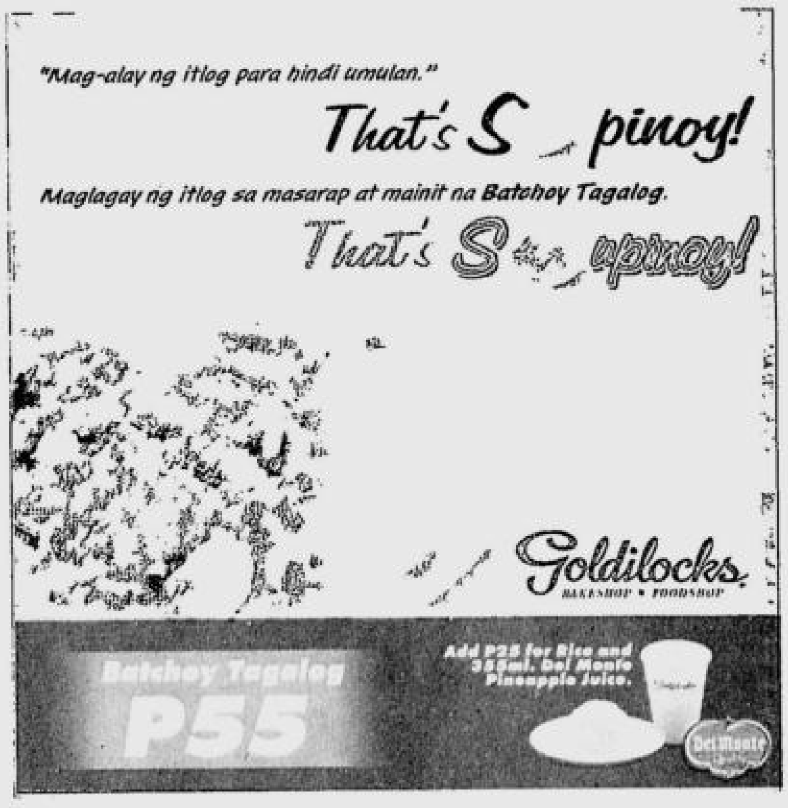
Tobiano wants to make Qualibet the top testing laboratory in the Philippines. But, in the end, although all the testings may be precise and accurate, she still won't be happy without seeing complementary action from the government and the public. As in: treat the water to make it safe, take lead out of cosmetics and toys, label food products accurately, like that.

"Let us do it for the children," said Tobiano, whose big dream is to see her two daughters and all other children live in a world without cancer. "Let them live safer and better lives."

Qualibet may be reached through tels. 3748003 and 3727993; fax 4106048; e-mail qualibettesting@yahoo.com.



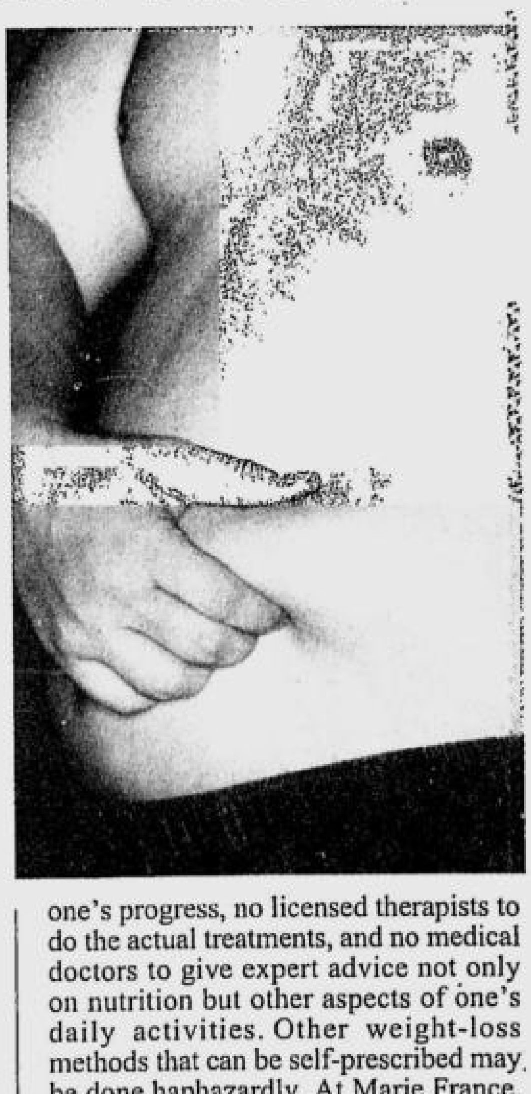
HEALTHY bread from Goldilocks (left, above). At Qualibet, water samples from households are tested for a fee of P500.



"Mag-alay ng itlog para hindi umulan."
That's S pinoy!
Maglagay ng itlog sa masarap at mainit na Batchoy Tagalog.
That's Supinoy!
Goldilocks BAKESHOP • FOODSHOP
Batchoy Tagalog P55
Add P25 for Rice and 355ml. Del Monte Pineapple Juice.

The Truth Behind Men and Weight Gain: A Doctor's Point of View

Dr. Ariel Torres answers frequently asked questions about men and weight gain, exercise myths, and the "beer belly."



Q: What makes the abdominal area susceptible to weight gain in men?
A: Fat predilection is dictated at birth by genetics. It just so happens that due to genetic sexual differences the fat predilection of men is at the abdominal area.

Q: What are the dangers or health risks of having a "beer belly?"
A: A "beer belly" is due to accumulation of visceral fat in between the internal organs of the trunk. This is directly related to risks of developing diseases like hypertension and diabetes.

Q: What should men do in order to avoid getting a beer belly?
A: Regular exercise and not overeating is a good way to start. Exercise does not have to be strenuous gym workouts or an exhilarating sports activity. Any physical exercise like walking or climbing stairs may suffice, as long as it's done regularly.

Q: Do sit-ups work on a "beer belly?"
A: A person who hasn't been exercising on a regular basis and suddenly does sit-ups would be able to do only a few. This does not burn a significant amount of calories to lose weight. It may tone their lax abdominal muscles a little but due to the burden of carrying the excessive fat that is still present, it won't last long and fatigue would eventually set in.

Q: Why are Marie France treatments ideal for men to lose weight?
A: Most physical exercises are stressful and produce a counter-effect hunger stimulus. Usually men increase their appetite once they start exercising. The problem is when they stop exercising their appetite remains high. This can be seen in athletes who retire and end up with a dramatic weight gain. At Marie France, calorie burning is enhanced but there is no increase in hunger stimulus because the treatments are relaxing.

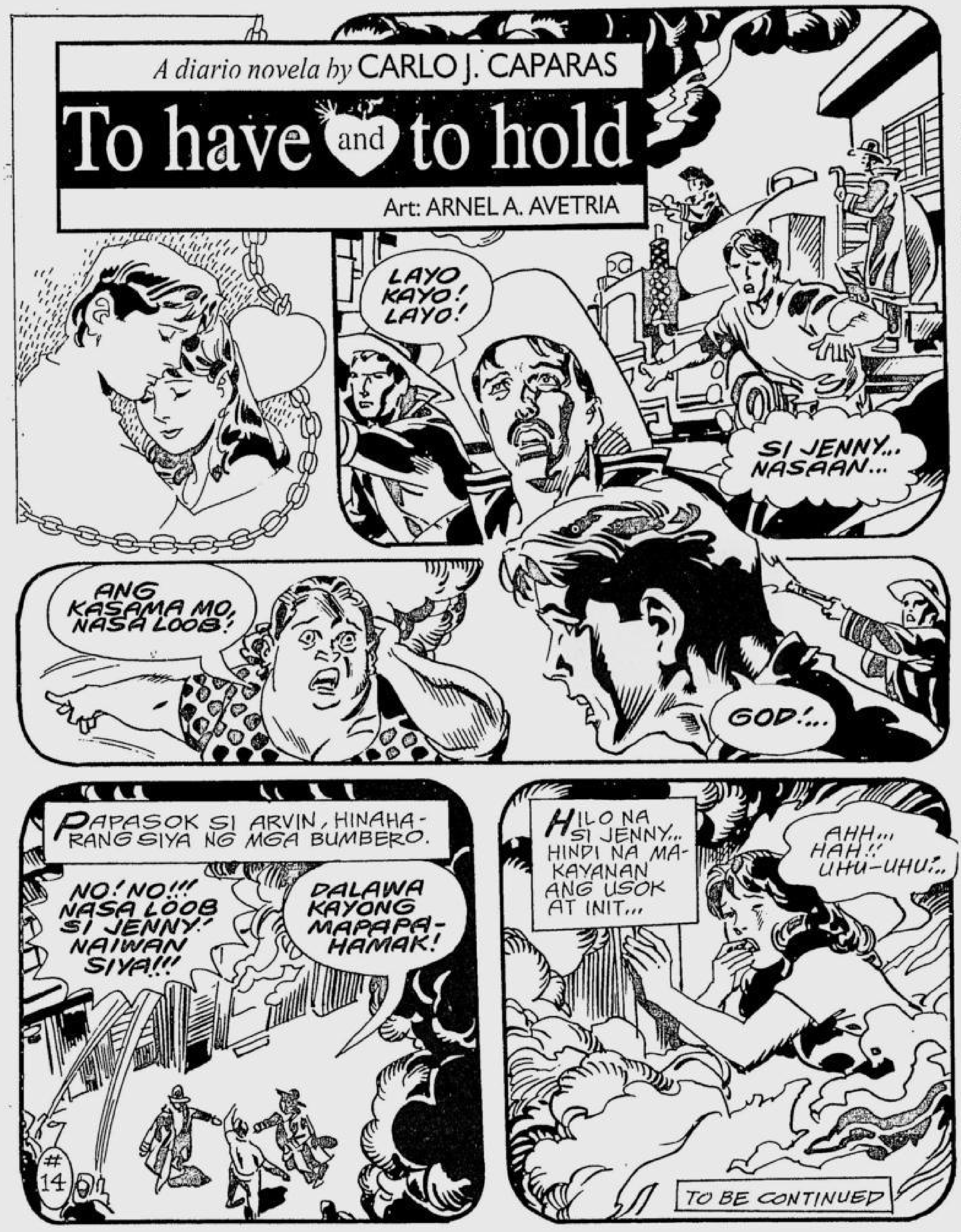
Q: What are some of the advantages of Marie France over other methods?
A: Marie France is not only about state-of-the-art treatments and their effects. It's the entire holistic program that is their secret. Other slimming centers may offer similar treatments but not as a program. In the local setting, other centers have no figure consultants to monitor one's progress, no licensed therapists to do the actual treatments, and no medical doctors to give expert advice not only on nutrition but other aspects of one's daily activities. Other weight-loss methods that can be self-prescribed may be done haphazardly. At Marie France, the choice of treatments are meticulously performed, the applications of treatments are standardized to the highest levels, and the client is pampered with a lot of professional care.

You can lose that bulging beer belly and all your excess weight! Call Marie France FOR MEN today for a free consultation at 813-7959.

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

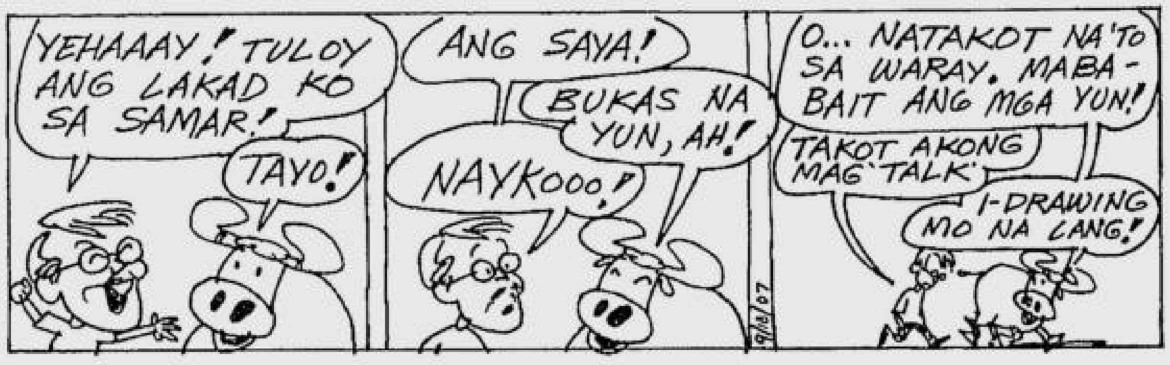
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


LAYO KAYO! LAYO!
SI JENNY... NASAAN...
ANG KASAMA MO, NASA LOOB!
GOD!...
PAPASOK SI ARVIN, HINAHARANG SIYA NG MGA BUMBERO.
NO! NO!!! NASA LOOB SI JENNY! NAIWAN SIYA!!!
DALAWA KAYONG MAPAPAHAMAK!
#14
HILO NA SI JENNY... HINDI NA MAKAYANAN ANG USOK AT INIT...
AHH... HAH!! UHU-UHU!..
TO BE CONTINUED

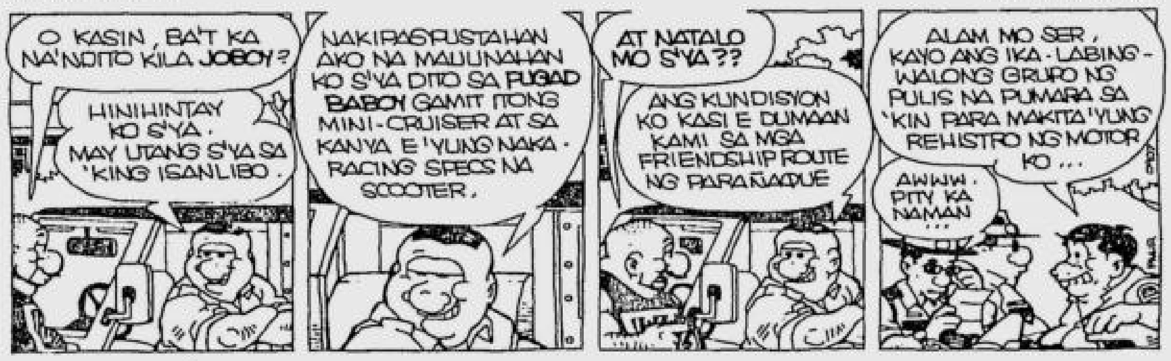
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


YEHAAAY! TULOY ANG LAKAD KO SA SAMAR!
TAYO!
ANG SAYA!
BUKAS NA YUN, AH!
NAYKooo!
O... NATAKOT NA'TO SA WARAY. MABABAIT ANG MGA YUN!
TAKOT AKONG MAG 'TALK'
I-DRAWING MO NA LANG!

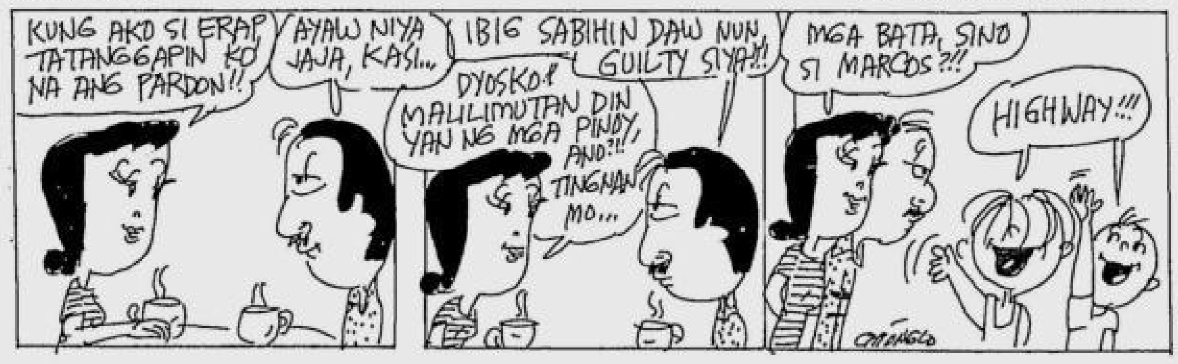
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


O KASIN, BA'T KA NA'NDITO KILA JOBOY?
HINIHINTAY KO S'YA. MAY UTANG S'YA SA 'KING ISANLIBO.
NAKIPAGPUSTAHAN AKO NA MAUUNAHAN KO S'YA DITO SA PUGAD BABOY GAMIT ITONG MINI-CRUISER AT SA KANYA E 'YUNG NAKA-RACING SPECS NA SCOOTER.
AT NATALO MO S'YA??
ANG KUNDISYON KO KASI E DUMAAN KAMI SA MGA FRIENDSHIP ROUTE NG PARAÑAQUE
ALAM MO SER, KAYO ANG IKA-LABING-WALONG GRUPO NG PULIS NA PUMARA SA 'KIN PARA MAKITA 'YUNG REHISTRO NG MOTOR KO...
AWWW. PITY KA NAMAN...

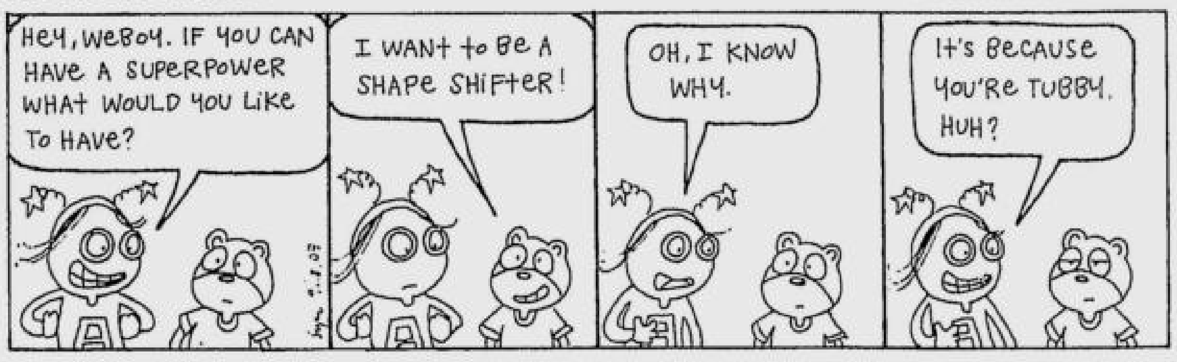
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


KUNG AKO SI ERAP, TATANGGAPIN KO NA ANG PARDON!!
AYAW NIYA JAJA, KASI...
IBIG SABIHIN DAW NUN, GUILTY SIYA!!
DYOSKO! MALILIMUTAN DIN YAN NG MGA PINOY, ANO?!!
TINGNAN MO...
MGA BATA, SINO SI MARCOS?!!
HIGHWAY!!!
CHIONGLO

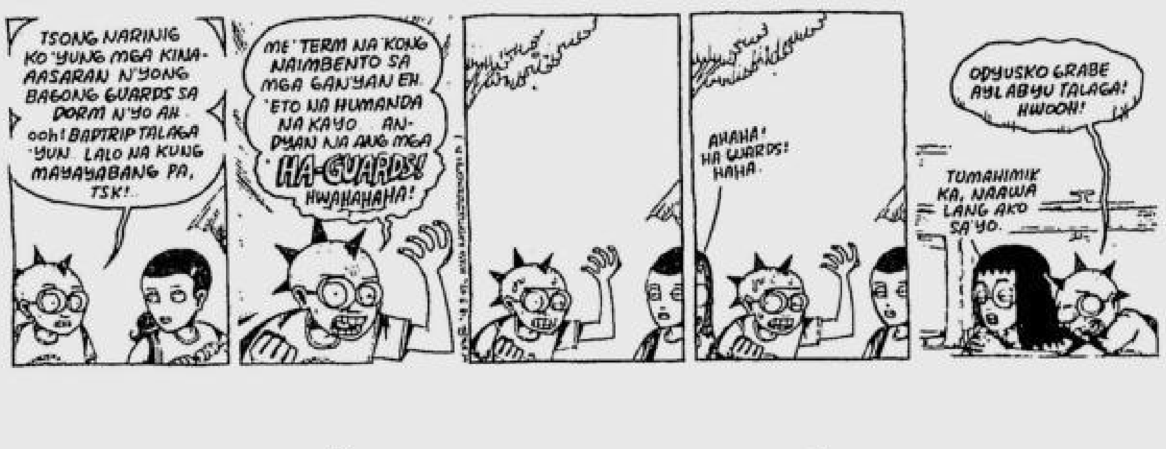
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HEY, WEBOY. IF YOU CAN HAVE A SUPERPOWER WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE?
I WANT to BE A SHAPE SHIFTER!
OH, I KNOW WHY.
It's BECAUSE YOU'RE TUBBY. HUH?

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSONG NARINIG KO 'YUNG MGA KINA-AASARAN N'YONG BAGONG GUARDS SA DORM N'YO AH. ooh! BADTRIP TALAGA 'YUN. LALO NA KUNG MAYAYABANG PA, TSK!
ME' TERM NA KONG NAIMBENTO SA MGA GAN'YAN EH. 'ETO NA HUMANDA NA KAYO... ANDYAN NA ANG MGA HA-GUARDS! HWAHAHAHA!
AHAHA! HA GUARDS! HAHA.
ODYUSKO GRABE AYLABYU TALAGA! HWOOH!
TUMAHIMIK KA, NAAWA LANG AKO SA'YO.

DAILY CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	■	6	7	8	9	10	■	11	12	13
14					■	15					■	16		
17					18						■	19		
■	■	■	20					■	■	21	22			
23	24	25		■	26			27	28					
29				30		■	■	31						
32					■	33	34			■	■	■	■	■
■	35				36					37	38	39	40	■
■	■	■	■	■	41				■	42				43
44	45	46	47	48			■	■	49					
50							51	52		■	53			
54					■	■	55			56		■	■	■
57			■	58	59	60						61	62	63
64			■	65					■	66				
67			■	68					■	69				

By Edgar Fontaine
Dighton, MA

9/18/07

ACROSS
1 Che's cohort
6 Basketry willow
11 Put on
14 Occurrence
15 Line dance
16 U-turn from WSW
17 2007 Masters winner
19 Actor Jude
20 Ancient market
21 Military blockade
23 Town on the Firth of Lorn
26 "The Producers" star
29 Save from a pickle
31 Large drinking cups
32 Chips in chips
33 Whirl around
35 Lila Kedrova's Oscar winner
41 Potter's need
42 Skylit courtyards
44 Magic-lamp boy
49 Disarm a bull
50 Philosopher of paradoxes
53 Sister of Osiris
54 Dispatch boat
55 Sound
57 NASA's moon vehicle
58 Colorado explorer
64 Period of history
65 Make used (to)
66 Plains tribe
67 Pompous person
68 Mystery writers' award
69 Pleasure craft

DOWN
1 Shriner topper
2 1997 French Open champ Majoli
3 Yule mo.
4 Augmenter
5 Rank above Ens.
6 Earthy color
7 Sub detector
8 Party in power
9 Trip taken in vain?
10 Captive's cost
11 Wipe from memory
12 Wild ass
13 Handrail posts
18 Seepage
22 Capital attachment?
23 __ pro nobis
24 Automobile pioneer
25 Regarding
27 Bay window
28 Bean of bean sprouts
30 PC port
33 Boulder
34 Greek letter
36 You wish!
37 Arctic explorer John
38 African nation
39 Aphrodite's son
40 __ Te Kanawa
43 Part of Q & A
44 Decorative bush
45 Prying tools
46 Inner selves
47 Uno y uno
48 Lulu
49 Joint groove
51 Davies of the LPGA
52 Swiss mathematician
56 Black as night
59 Terminate
60 Pester
61 Quadrennially prominent grp.
62 Unit of elec.
63 Have dinner

Monday's Puzzle Solved

A	B	U	S	E	R	■	G	U	M	■	B	A	R	T
N	E	M	A	T	O	■	I	N	A	■	I	G	O	R
G	L	A	R	E	S	■	R	A	Y	■	L	A	N	E
I	L	S	A	■	A	C	L	U	■	C	L	I	C	K
E	O	S	■	F	R	A	S	■	R	H	I	N	O	S
■	■	■	B	E	I	N	G	■	E	R	E	■	■	■
M	A	C	A	R	O	N	I	■	F	I	J	I	A	N
A	L	A	R	M	■	A	R	P	■	S	E	N	A	T
J	A	B	B	E	D	■	L	A	N	T	A	N	A	S
■	■	■	A	N	T	■	S	P	A	I	N	■	■	■
S	H	I	R	T	S	■	G	A	P	E	■	H	A	Y
L	I	S	A	S	■	W	I	S	H	■	B	I	D	E
A	R	E	A	■	B	A	R	■	T	B	O	N	E	S
K	E	R	N	■	I	L	L	■	H	A	N	D	L	E
E	D	E	N	■	D	E	S	■	A	N	N	I	E	S

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9/18/07

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

					5		2	
				3	4	5		9
		4	6				7	
		3					9	7
	8			2			6	
9	1					8		
	5				2	1		
2		6	3	7				
	9		5					

Difficulty Level ★★

9/18

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Answer to previous puzzle

8	6	7	9	1	5	4	3	2
4	3	5	2	7	8	9	6	1
9	1	2	3	6	4	8	5	7
1	5	8	4	3	2	6	7	9
7	9	4	1	8	6	3	2	5
3	2	6	5	9	7	1	4	8
5	7	3	8	4	9	2	1	6
2	4	9	6	5	1	7	8	3
6	8	1	7	2	3	5	9	4

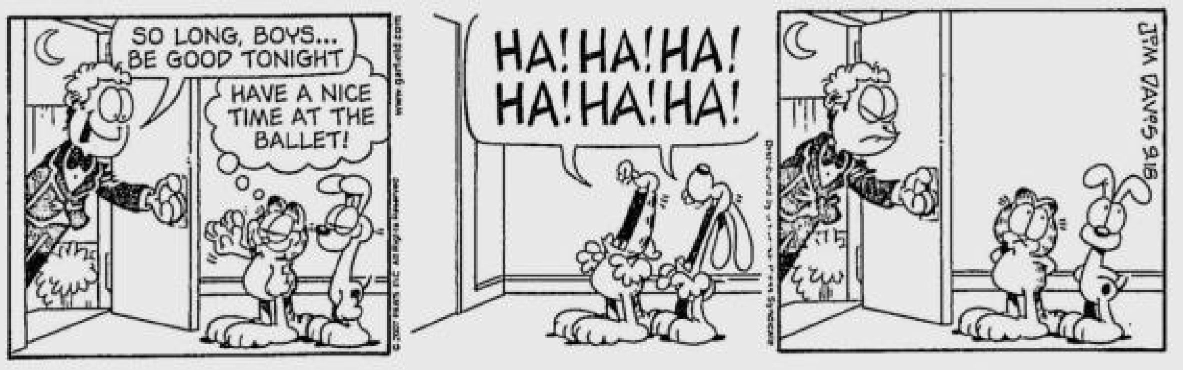
Difficulty Level ★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


SO LONG, BOYS... BE GOOD TONIGHT
HAVE A NICE TIME AT THE BALLET!
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
JPM DAVIS 9-18

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're practical, hardworking, purposeful and determined to achieve your goals. You're also keen to learn. This is not to say you don't love your creature comforts, because you do! In your early 30s, you'll become more intense and more in touch with your personal power. In the year ahead, you'll dismantle or move on from something you've been involved with for the past nine years

Birthdate of: James Gandolfini, actor; Lance Armstrong, athlete; Jada Pinkett Smith, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a wonderful day to mend broken fences with partners and close friends. You easily can put yourself in somebody else's shoes in order to understand where others are coming from.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might waste a little time daydreaming at work today; however, the upside is that you're full of imaginative, wonderful ideas!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're in touch with your Muse today. If you have artistic desires, inclinations or projects, exploit this moment! Romantic discussions and time spent with children will be heartwarming.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You find it easy to be sympathetic with family members today. You know they need someone to listen to them. (Alternatively, you might need to confide in someone.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your psychic sense is strong today. It's as if you know what people are thinking or what they're going to say before they speak. Because of this, you can have meaningful discussions with others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is not necessarily a good day for financial transactions. Wishful thinking might overrule your clear logic. It's easy to see things as you wish they were rather than how they really are.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're charming, caring, supportive and kind to others today. You're wearing your heart on your sleeve. (Naturally, it's color-coordinated.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Don't worry if you spend time woolgathering or daydreaming today. It's just that kind of day. Enjoy yourself.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might have unusual conversations with someone today about esoteric subjects or mystical ideas. You're interested in anything that is unusual or mysterious.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Parents, bosses and VIPs might be impressed by your visionary ideas today. Don't be afraid to test what you're thinking. Why not run your ideas up the flagpole to see if anyone salutes?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): All Aquarians are born 50 years ahead of their time. Today you feel this. The ideas that interest you are way-out and really ahead of the pack.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Today you'll be interested in doing some fundraising or figuring out ways to share things to help those who are less fortunate. The suffering of others arouses your sympathy today.

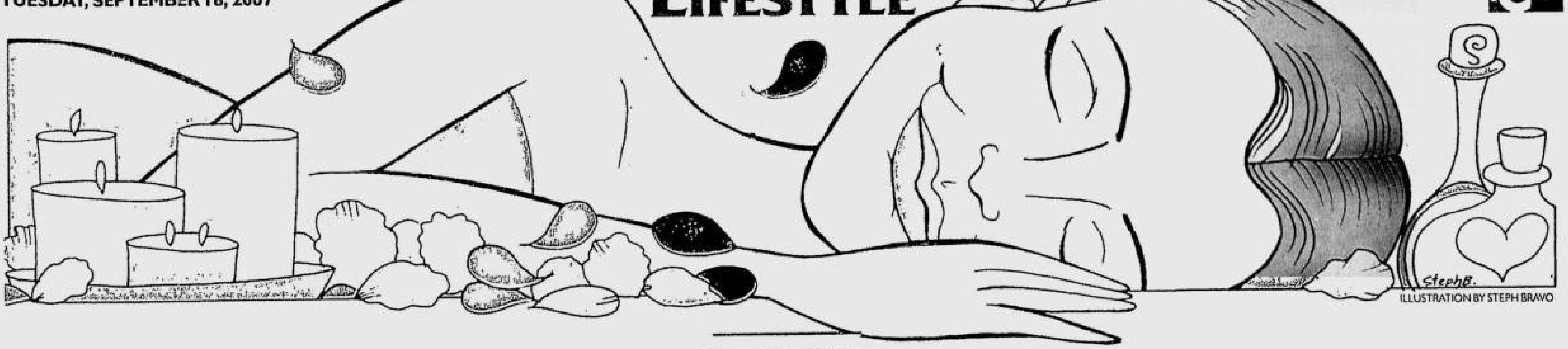


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

It's spa-rty time!

IT IS TIME TO PARTY AND TO outdo all parties because it will be a celebration that incorporates well-being.

Whether it is a party for one or 100, it will result in relaxation and rejuvenation for the revelers.

Interested? Here is how to hold such a party.

Mind shift

Replace your standard concept of celebrating with alcohol/spirits, heavy/rich buffet, loud/bouncy music with a new one. Imagine having herbal teas/fruit juices, light and healthy food selections, and soft, calming music.

If you can imagine it, then you can have it. If you cannot, then it will not become a reality for you.

But what if you were told that after a spa experience you will feel re-engaged and revitalized? Would you do it?

More for less

When you lessen the frills in your life, you can feel less burdened. So, lighten your load now by admitting to yourself that you have been overloading your system—body, mind and spirit.

Today is the perfect moment to embrace more into your life—more peace of mind, more quiet time, more sleep, more joy. So, lessen your load to increase your lightness of being.

Getting started

The basic tools and paraphernalia you need to get started include flowers (rose petals, jasmine blooms, *sampaguita* buds), indoor plants, candles (of all sizes and colors), aromatherapy lamps, essential oils (lavender, rose, peppermint, bergamot, *ylang-ylang*, etc.), a portable indoor fountain, floor mats, throw pillows/cushions, relaxing music with nature sounds, a cool ventilated room.

Ingredients required:

For body pampering

- Sugar (brown or *muscovado*)
- Rock salt
- Virgin coconut oil or Cocozen virgin coco oil (body massage oils and forever young oils by Cory)
- Fruits: avocado, pineapple, coconut water, fresh milk, honey

Face and body scrub:

- Mix three tablespoons of sugar with one teaspoon coco oil. Rub it all over your face (avoid eye area) and body.
- Wash off with clean water.
- Splash coco water.
- Splash fresh milk.
- Rub face and body with honey (leave on for five minutes).
- Shower and rinse with warm water.

Silky mask:

For extra luxury, rub mashed avocado on face and body. Leave on for 10 minutes for deep-moisturizing.

Citrus bath zest:

A fruit cocktail in a warm tub guarantees the best perk-you-up treat. Throw in (after washing well with soap and water) sliced oranges, *calamansi, dayap*, plus two tablespoons of virgin coco oil.

Cover your eyes with cotton dipped in ice water. Sink in your tub. Relax for five minutes. Sip a tall, cool glass of juice (from your citrus fruits mixed with one tablespoon of honey).

Keep it light

During mealtimes, serve big, generous bowls of salad with grapes, nuts, strawberries, oranges. Pasta with olive oil and garlic or fresh tomato sauce is good, too.

Home spa massage

Call for home spa service from any of your favorite centers. But if you have time to indulge your "spa-rty" mood, try several places offering unique services such as Blue Water Day Spa (tel. 9272258; 8173125). It offers Tibetan Meridian Therapy for elimination of cellulite in the fatty areas of the body. This is a deep-tissue massage that applies heat energy using low fire that is well-controlled and safely applied.

Touch & Heal Spa (tel. 893-7894) offers a reflex massage using bamboo sticks and deep tissue manipulation with an Asian touch. The place is in a cozy, dimly lit corner of the Makati business district.

De-stressing tips

The best medicine to drive the blues and worries away are:

- Laughter—Watch humorous movies, be with comical/funny friends.
- Music and song—Sing your heart out or simply listen to inspiring music.
- Exercise—The more you move your body, the more feel-good hormones will lift you up inside and out.

Affirm

Believe that you are well and feel it. "I feel great. I look great."

Love and light!

INNER AWARENESS
Jaime Licauco

Yes, ETs and UFOs are real

Part 1

WE DO NOT HEAR MUCH ABOUT extraterrestrials (ETs) and unidentified flying objects (UFOs) lately.

But recently, a member of our Aeropagus Spiritual Discussion Group suggested that we discuss the subject during our next meeting on Sept. 27.

The subject of UFOs has never really been taken seriously by mainstream scientists, despite the well-publicized opinion of highly respected Cornell University astronomer Carl Sagan.

The scientist said, with the sheer vastness of the universe's innumerable star systems, planets and galaxies, it is possible for intelligent creatures to exist somewhere out there.

Our Milky Way alone has some 250 million stars. About a million of these might have planets capable of supporting some form of highly technical civilization, according to Sagan.

About 30 or 35 years ago, numerous sightings of so-called UFOs in the United States and other western countries prompted the US to direct the Air Force to study them.

Known as the Condon Report or Project Blue Book, the study concluded 90 percent of those sightings were no more than mere light reflections, weather balloon objects, or the result of some other natural causes. There was no evidence of flying objects from outer space.

Ignored

But what about the 10 percent that could not be explained rationally? They were simply ignored and forgotten.

It became obvious to one of the Air Force's consultants, Dr. Allen Hynek, a Northwestern University astronomer, that Project Blue Book was nothing more than a demolition job against UFOs.

When I am asked if I believe in UFOs, my answer is a categorical yes. I have actually witnessed several of them, some in Mt. Banahaw in Dolores, Quezon; others in Pila, Laguna; Roxas City in Capiz and, once, outside the window of my own house in Parañaque.

All sightings occurred in late evenings or early mornings. And I have talked to many people who have experienced similar sightings.

"What about ETs? Do you believe there are such creatures?" I am also asked.

My reply is still a categorical yes, not only because so many credible witnesses have reported seeing or encountering them at close range, but I myself have "seen and spoken" with one inside a big rock or boulder somewhere in Lukban, Quezon Province.

Not farfetched

The existence of ETs and UFOs is not really that farfetched and people who believe in them are not crazy if we look at the preponderance of evidence in many parts of the world throughout the history of humankind.

In fact the first very clear and unmistakable encounter with a UFO can be found in the Christian Bible, in the first chapter of the Book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament.

You will find a very detailed description of the priest Ezekiel's encounter with strange-looking humanoid ETs in a strange spacecraft or vehicle that emitted sounds like thunder and moved mechanically in four directions.

He saw four creatures who spoke to him and instructed him to go to the house of Israel to tell the people the contents of the scroll that they had given him to eat.

"As for the appearance of their faces," according to Ezekiel, "the four had the face of a human being, the face of a lion on the right side, the face of an ox on the left and the face of an eagle."

Note: For inquiries on books, paranormal services and seminars on Inner Mind Development, ESP and Intuition Development, and Soulmates, Karma & Reincarnation conducted by this writer, please call 8107245, 8926806; fax 8159890; or e-mail innerawareness_2005@yahoo.com.ph.

Training on diabetes

A POST-GRADUATE TRAINING on Diabetes Education will be held Sept. 28-Oct. 27, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., at the College of Nursing, University of the East, Ramon Magsaysay, Aurora Boulevard, QC.

Jointly undertaken by the Association of Diabetes Nurse Educators of the Philippines and the Philippine Association of Diabetes Educators, the course is designed for nurses, nutritionist-dieticians and allied health professionals.

Registration fee is P9,000.

The Association of Diabetes Nurse Educators of the Philippines will hold the Diabetes Nursing Education Update for 2007 on Sept. 22, 8 a.m.-12 noon, at Atrium 2, 8/F, Philippine Heart Center, East Avenue, QC.

Theme is "Foot and Wound Care." The seminar is open to registered nurses (P250) and nursing students (P150).

Your Doctor Knows Best

Delfin A. Tan, MD, FPOGS

Question:

My friend told me that she had excessive menstrual bleeding and was diagnosed to have uterine fibroids upon consultation with her doctor. I had similar menstrual bleeding episodes. what should I do?

Doctor Says...

Uterine fibroids, also known as myoma, are benign tumors of the muscular wall of the uterus (womb). This is one of the most common tumors in the body. Although the exact incidence is unknown, approximately 30% of the female population may have this condition and most will not present with any symptom at all.

The exact cause of fibroids is unknown, but it seems to be influenced by the female sex hormone, estrogen. Uterine fibroids may vary in size from that of a small pea to as large as a basketball. Fibroids are classified based on their location; these may be located on the peritoneal surface (subserous), within the muscle wall of the womb (intramural), or beneath the endometrium projecting into the uterine cavity (submucous).

Presenting symptoms may depend on the size and location of the fibroid. Although fibroids are very common, these are mostly asymptomatic. When symptoms occur, they include: a palpable mass or increase in girth, excessively heavy menstrual bleeding, which is similar to your case, pressure effects causing backache, urinary retention or pain. Anemia that manifests as weakness and pallor is evident in patients with excessive menstrual bleeding. Fibroid is associated with infertility, which may also be the presenting symptom. Your doctor may perform abdominal palpation or bimanual pelvic examination to look for hard, rounded or lobular mass(es) that is (are) continuous with the uterus.

Aside from the above symptoms, uterine fibroids can be diagnosed by the use of ultrasound scan. This is vital to differentiate fibroids from other causes of uterine swelling or other pelvic tumors.

Treatment depends on the age of the patient, her wish for future fertility and the severity of symptoms. If fibroids are small and present without symptoms, careful observation is warranted. If excessive bleeding and pain are present, the patient may be given medical therapy like analgesics and hormonal treatment. If these fail, surgery may be necessary. Myomectomy (removal of fibroids) is considered for patients wishing to conceive in the future or do not want to have their uterus removed for whatever reason. Recurrence of myoma is possible. If hysterectomy (removal of the womb) is performed, there is obviously no chance for the fibroids to recur. This is considered for older patients who do not wish to have a child anymore.

Uterine fibroid is a common condition. For proper guidance, evaluation and management, please consult your doctor.

Dr. Tan is an Obstetrician/Gynecologist. He is an active consultant and holds clinics at the United Doctors Medical Center and St. Luke's Medical Center.

This column is supported by AstraZeneca Philippines as part of its disease awareness campaign. This is not intended to replace the advice of a healthcare professional. Always consult your doctor.

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Take Charge Doc!

What is liver cancer and what are its symptoms?

Liver cancer (hepatocellular carcinoma) is a cancer arising from the liver. It is also known as primary liver cancer or hepatoma. Most people don't have signs and symptoms in the early stages of liver cancer, which means the disease may not be detected until it's quite advanced. When symptoms do appear, they may include some or all of the following: loss of appetite and weight; abdominal pain, especially in the upper right part of your abdomen, that may extend into your back and shoulder; nausea and vomiting; body weakness and fatigue; an enlarged liver; abdominal swelling (ascites); and yellowish discoloration of your skin and the whites of your eyes (jaundice). Primary liver cancer is rarely discovered early and often doesn't respond to current treatments — thus, the prognosis is often poor. Even when treatments fail to provide much improvement in the liver cancer itself, pain and other signs and symptoms caused by liver cancer can be aggressively treated to improve quality of life. But the most important thing to remember about primary liver cancer is that you can greatly reduce your risk by protecting yourself from hepatitis infection (by receiving hepatitis B vaccination) and cirrhosis (avoid/limit alcohol intake), which are the leading causes of the disease. There are different types of treatment for patients with adult primary liver cancer namely: surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy and percutaneous ethanol injection.

Dr. Romeo Subiate provides us with this week's discussion on Liver Cancer. Doc Romy, a medicine graduate of the Far Eastern University-NRMF, took his residency training for a specialization in Internal medicine at Metropolitan Medical Center and later had his sub-specialization in Gastroenterology at Manila Doctors Hospital. He is a member of the Philippine Society of Hepatology and the Tarlac Medical Society. He is also a diplomate of the Philippine College of Physicians, Philippine Society of Gastroenterology and the Philippine Society of digestive endoscopy. Doc Romy spends his free time trekking with his fellow mountaineers from the Cordillera Mountaineers Explorer (COMEX) in tarlac. MEDICard members may avail for his consultations at Ramos General Hospital from Monday to Friday 10-12nn and every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at Jecsons Medical Center 3 to 5 pm.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

MEDICard [illegible] Makati City 1227 [illegible] MEDICARD and send to [illegible] Globe subscribers [illegible] www.medicardphils.com

RICO Blanco and Suyen Lim, group product manager of Human

BRYAN Lim, Chris Tan and Crystal

SHARON, Jude and Harvie Ong

BLANCO is mobbed after the Human fashion event.

SHERA Tiu, Bench genius Ben Chan and man with the golden touch Jasper Tiu

Rico Blanco's T-shirt designs rock & roll

THERE WERE TONS OF MUSIC LOVERS and loads of fashionistas, *palanggas*, that flocked to the Glorietta Activity Center for the unveiling of **Rico Blanco**'s choice and exciting new T-shirt designs for Human, natch!

The rocking fashion show was followed by autograph-signing and store visit by the man of the moment himself, Rico B., to the delight of many.

"Everyday rock 'n' roll" is the style du jour, dahlings, a combination of Blanco's casual day-to-night fashion and Human's individualistic statement.

The capsule collection featured a flair for the dramatic: from a 2D vintage microphone graphic around the neckline to a necktie cheekily reverse-printed on a black background, checkered suspenders "sketched" from shoulder to hip, mixed with updated references to the underground punk rock with metallic leggings; contrast ties and the skinniest of skinny belts.

The show itself was spectacular, harking back to the glam punk days of **Souxie Soux**, Blondie and Space Oddity, and **David Bowie**, no less, *palanggas*.

Suyen Lim said, "Rico is highly creative. One never knows what he'll think of next, whether it's another song spun out of his imagination or random thoughts, or maybe another work of art. But for sure it will always be a hit."

When *moi* asked him to comment, Blanco said, "This fashion show was a new experience for me. I mean, I'm used to performing in front of an audience but it's different when it's your work that's performing for you. *Ang sarap.*

"I'm really thankful I've been given so many opportunities to share my art with people who are as stoked as I am. Plus, my family at Human is always open to new ideas. I'm so grateful I collaborate with fresh minds who are genuinely interested in making their customers happy."

Hey, now, everyone can go one step up the ladder of cool, *palanggas*, thanks to Blanco's new awesome designs that are simply super Human. They are available at all Human stores nationwide.

BRILLIANT Elizabeth T. Sy toasts the grand launch of SMIC's pioneering ecotourism project, Hamilo Coast.

MAILET Bonoan, Jojo Sacro and wife

Coastal paradise in Batangas

Palanggas, a new paradise has been discovered for us where we can get that rich, chic golden tan, go surfing or just lie on the pristine sand.

Yes, dahlings, it's the pinnacle of coastal living, thanks to the forward-looking SM Investments Corp. that has opened its pioneer eco-tourism project, Hamilo Coast.

The fantastic launch of this breezy, laid-back surfside enclave in Nasugbu, Batangas, with its excellent facilities, eco-friendly amenities and dynamic fusion of urban essentials, ushered in a redefined concept of leisure.

The event featured laid-back live music from **Nyco Maca**, Playground and Juan Pablo Dream, endless cocktails, booze and wine by the bay. Superbly catered by The Plaza, *natch*, buffet tables were filled from end to end.

The *tres* exclusive unveiling of Pico de Loro Cove's scale model (the first of Hamilo Coast's 13 coastal developments), was the highlight of the event, giving us a glimpse of the stunning development concept for the property, *palanggas*.

The spectacular, awesome coastal residential resort town is right where the sloping mountains of Batangas embrace the sea. Development plans include condominiums, a beach and country club, hotels, an al-fresco entertainment area, plus facilities for snorkeling and other water and adventure sports.

"SM Investment Corp.'s vision gives the public an opportunity to have a world-class tropical coastal experience [with nature] providing a dramatic backdrop," explained top PR mover-shaker and achiever **Amor Maclang**, dahlings. It will help boost the country's goal of being recognized as a premier tourism destination,

More info? Visit www.hamilocoast.com or call 8331907 or 8328837. Check out Hamilo Coast, Batangas' newest must-go-to place, *palanggas*.

Philippines-Earth 20
HOSEKI hot team. Faico, Zabeth Co and son Stefan, Miss Earth Philippines Jean Harn and Cindy Ng

PRINCESS Monjierra Disini, Georgina Padilla, Marylou Prieto Lovina, Conchita Bautista and Concepcion Cid

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using Kodak EasyShare system

Designing elegance

It was another happening for our town's bling-bling lovers, *palanggas*, when internationally acclaimed Hoseki unveiled its latest dazzling collection in an exclusive exhibit at the Ascott Hotel in Makati.

The *tres* intimate affair showcased the brave and bold collections that the award-winning Hoseki team of visionary artist **Faico**, corporate affairs director **Zabeth Co**, and the young and brilliant designers **Shamaine Ng** and **Knoi Esmane** has to offer, dahlings.

The whole room sparkled with the brilliance of Hoseki's exquisite designer jewelry and the passion of the chosen invitees as they tried on, or bought, some of the dazzling breathtaking pieces.

Circulating, chatting and enjoying the jewelry with their inner radiance were Bellevue's marketing and communications director, **Ryan Chan**; Furnitalia managing director **Florence Ko**; PCS best-dressed awardee **Eimee Cragun**; Friends for Cultural Concerns of the Philippines members headed by **Boysie Villavicencio**, **Nonie Basilio**; and Miss Earth Philippines **Jean Harn** who got a gorgeous specially designed jewelry from Hoseki, *naturellement*.

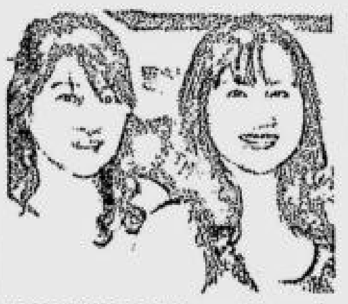
CARLO Aguinaldo and Mica Ruiz cuddle up.

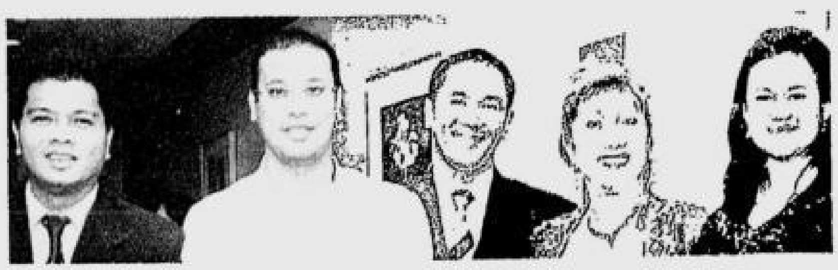
NYCO Maca provides live music.

MUEBLES Italiano president Noel Gonzales, Carmen Tan, Ricky Davao and mega emcee Johnny Litton

JOEM Pimentel and Pammy Martinez enjoy the vibes at the Hamilo Coast launch.

SANTI Picornel, Rina Macasaet and Monchu Garcia have cocktails by the bay.


LOW-PROFILE Irene Siy and Dolly Ching


HOTSHOT MEN. Bellevue's sales executive Alex Laya, marketing and communications director Ryan Chan, director of sales and marketing Benjie Martinez, vivacious Connie Garcia, and Angie Sison

National conference on autism

THE 10TH NATIONAL CONference on Autism will be held Nov. 10-11 with the theme "Hope after Diagnosis (A Life Journey with Autism)."

International and local speakers will cover various topics from basic information to medical advances, educational and intervention approaches and research findings.

They include Great Plains Laboratory for Health, Nutrition and Metabolism director Dr. William Shaw, who will give three lectures (causes of autism and attention deficit disorder, environment and nutrition, low-oxate diet and improvements in autism); educational psychologist Bimal Rai ("Bridging the Social Gap"); UP-CAMP Department of Occupational Therapy chair Christianne Marie Coronel ("Optimizing OT at Home: How to Raise Sensory-Smart Kids"); speech pathologist Joyce Marzan ("Language Leaps"); Independent Living Learning Center director Abelardo Apollo David Jr. ("Breaking Educational Barriers with Tools of the Trade"); psychoeducational assessment expert Dr. Edilberto Dizon ("A Paradigm of Effective and Relevant Education").

E-mail autismphil@pldtdsl.org or admin@autismsocietyph.org

Christian sings new 'tune'

CERTIFIED HIT-MAKER Christian Bautista has found comfort.

The balladeer has signed up as endorser of Outland Comfort Footwear's men's line. He joins former Miss International Precious Lara Quigaman as spokesperson of the footwear brand.

Bautista said comfort was important to him especially when performing before a big crowd and during road shows when he had to go around and reach out to his fans.

He said Outland footwear kept his feet free of blisters.

Outland carries shoes, sandals, slippers, and strap-ons. It specializes in the hand-sewn construction method.

Outland Comfort Footwear is available in leading department stores nationwide.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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Christian Bautista sings about his inspirations

CHRISTIAN BAUTISTA IS ALL AGOG FOR his major concert "Inspired" on Oct. 6 at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The song that best describes the state he is in right now is Chicago's "You're The Inspiration." His song for GF **Rachel Ann Go** is **Basil Valdez's** "You."

All of Christian's numbers in his concert will interact with a huge watch-out screen. But even without that, his moves are being watched closely to the point that even his friendship with **Sam Milby** and **Piolo Pascual** are being questioned.

"We don't let it affect our friendship," he said. "It's normal in show biz to put color into things."

You bet, Christian! This crazy biz has a way of finding meaning in the meaningless.

'Bagets' forever

Viva Films and Star Cinema are cooking up a movie for **Aga Muhlach** and **Anne Curtis**—"Waiting for Love"—about how opposites attract.

Aga's new lean look has made him an in-demand leading man for younger stars. After **Angelica Panganiban** in "A Love Story," he will be paired off with Anne. I teased Ags. "You're *bagets* forever, huh? Won't you get tempted to fall for Anne as if you were her age?" He laughed. "Graduate *na ko sa pagka-bagets. Salamat naman at* they say I still look young. But that doesn't mean playful and childish *pa din ang* heart *ko*. I am so so in love with my wife **Charlene**. I can't imagine life without her. Even when we wake up in the morning, it's synchronized. As I'm halfway through my first coffee, she'll get up already. I love having that kind of security knowing she will walk in the exact minute you expect her to."

Ah, the incredible lightness of being Aga Muhlach!

Resto owner

Ai -Ai de las Alas is venturing into the resto biz. "Small time *muna na* eatery near our village in Commonwealth. Then *pag nag*-click, *saka na ang pasosyal na* bistro," she said, laughing. "*Kumbaga sa* dialogue *ni* Ate Vi *sa* movie: *Ang carinderia ko ay bukas sa lahat ng gustong kumain.*"

I asked her, "Same goes for your heart? Is it available for all?" Ai replied, "*Wa na. May naka*-reserve *na*!"

Hopefully, the one Ai reserved her hyperactive heart for deserves it.

Four comediennes

During the shoot of Viva Films' "Apat Dapat" in Hong Kong, the Chinese were shocked to see **Ruffa Mae Quinto**, **Pokwang**, **Candy Pangilinan** and **Eugene Domingo** in micro-mini maid's uniforms. They couldn't stop ogling the comediennes.

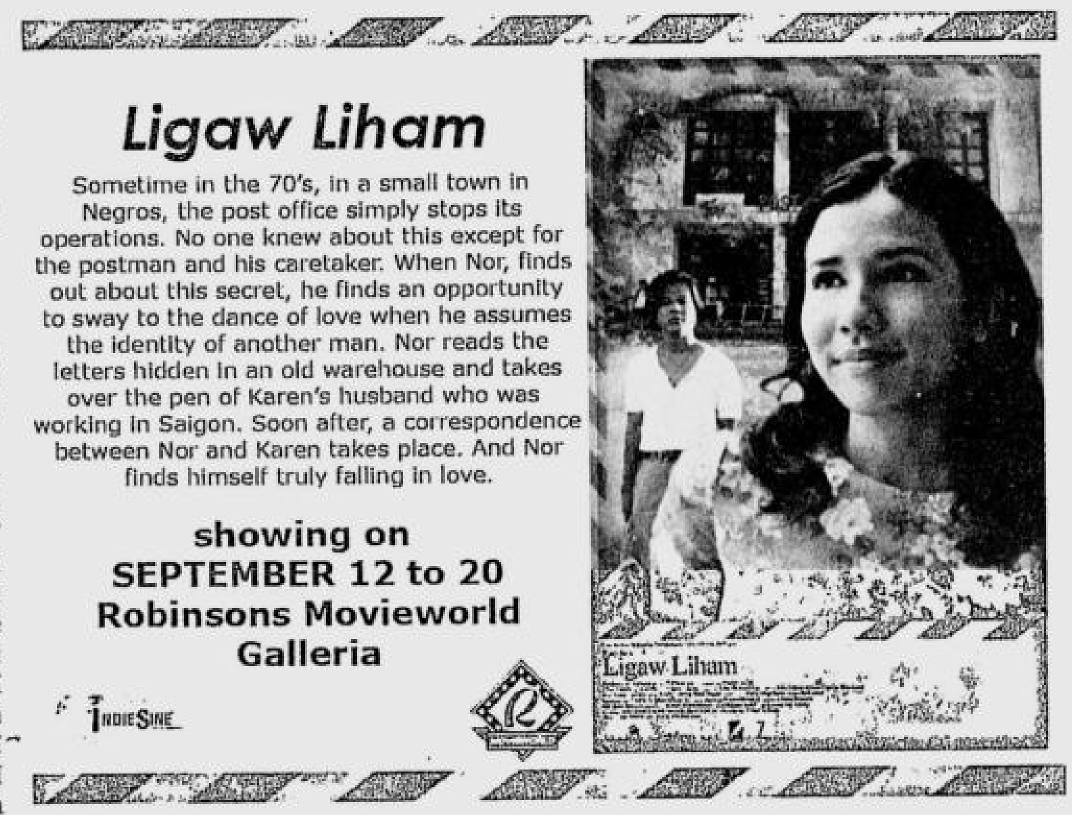
The movie is a spin-off of one of my all-time fave comedy films, "Weekend at Bernie's." Among the four lead stars, it was Pokwang whom the Chinese fancied the most. This prompted her co-stars to tease her that she might have a secret admirer again just like what happened to her in Spain. And it could get her embroiled in another controversy.

"Long Hair" Pokwang, huh? That makes girls long to be like her.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

DOLLY WOOD

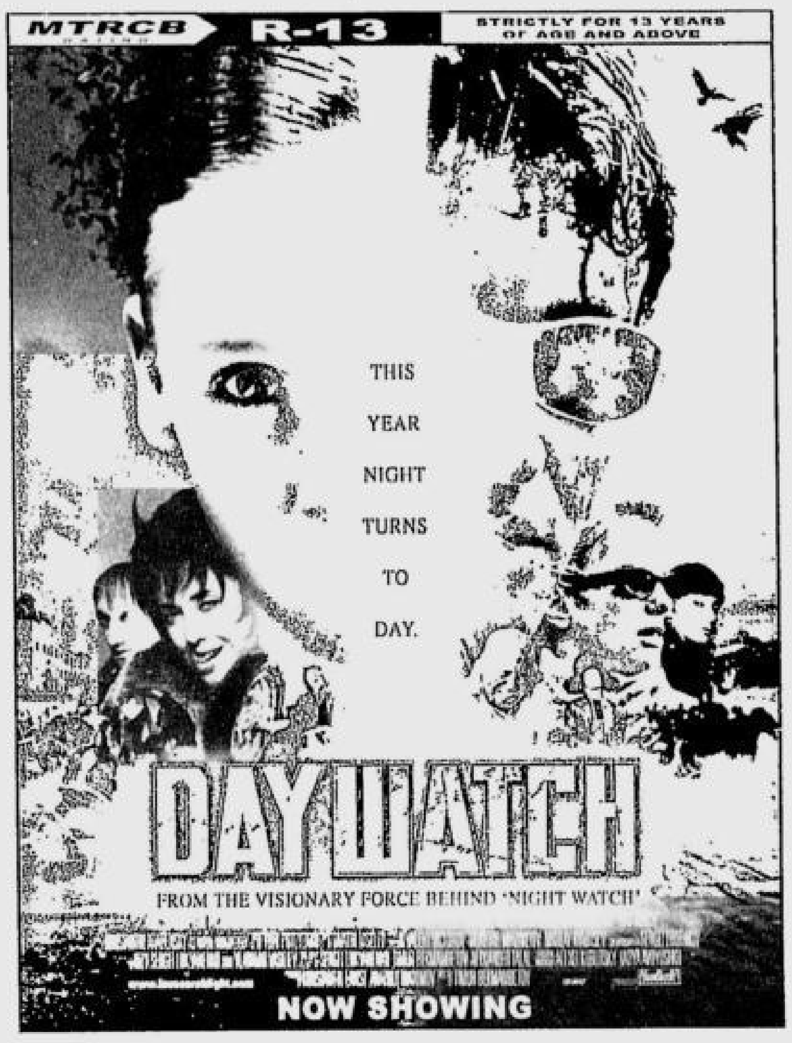
Dolly Anne Carvajal


Ligaw Liham

Sometime in the 70's, in a small town in Negros, the post office simply stops its operations. No one knew about this except for the postman and his caretaker. When Nor, finds out about this secret, he finds an opportunity to sway to the dance of love when he assumes the identity of another man. Nor reads the letters hidden in an old warehouse and takes over the pen of Karen's husband who was working in Saigon. Soon after, a correspondence between Nor and Karen takes place. And Nor finds himself truly falling in love.

showing on
SEPTEMBER 12 to 20
Robinsons Movieworld
Galleria

IndieSine
Ligaw Liham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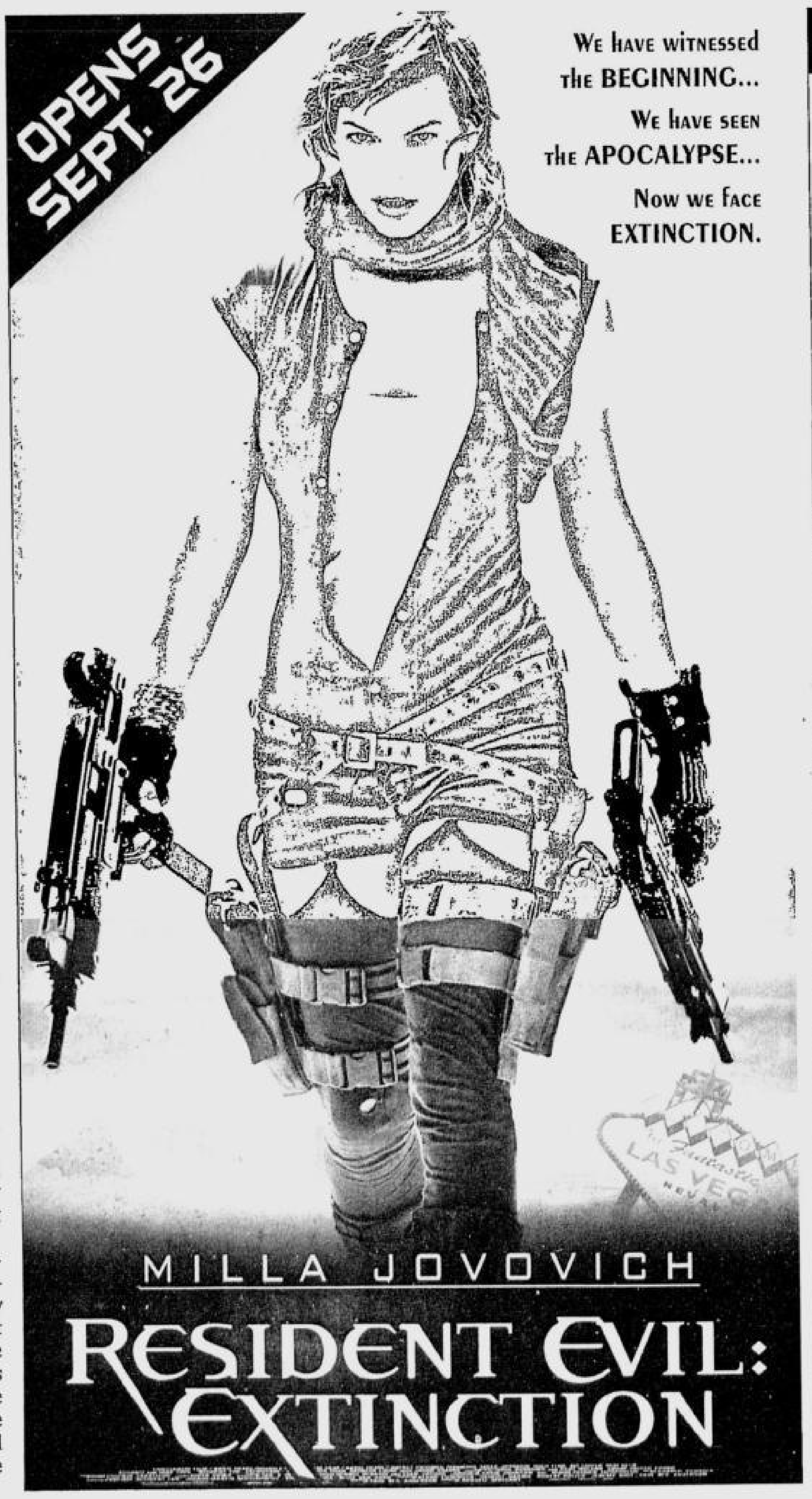
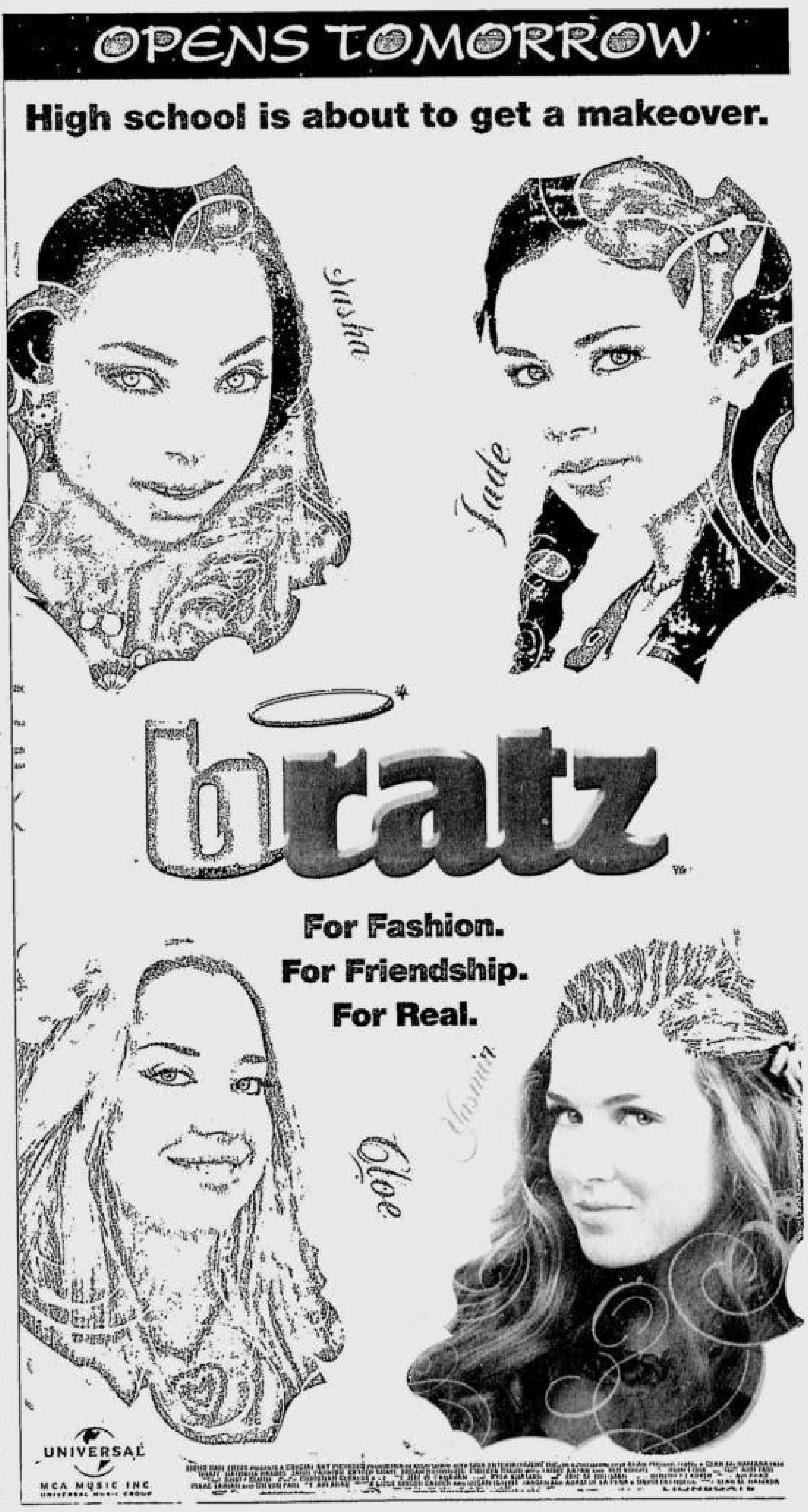

OPENS SEPT. 26
WE HAVE WITNESSED THE BEGINNING...
WE HAVE SEEN THE APOCALYPSE...
NOW WE FACE EXTINCTION.
MILLA JOVOVICH
RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION


OPENS TOMORROW
High school is about to get a makeover.
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3 indieSine: LIGAW LIHAM
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 UNDERDOG
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
12:30 2:30 4:30

7 FOSTER CHILD
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

8 DAYWATCH / NANCY DREW
12:30 3:05 / 5:40 7:40 9:40

9 1408
1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30

10 ROGUE ASSASSIN
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

Ligaw Liham

It's one of the 10 finalists in the 2007 Cinemalaya Digital Film Festival. Stars Karylle and introduces John Michael Lee this film also features Bacolod's finest actors John Gilbert Arceo and George Macalnan. Ligaw Liham was shot entirely in Negros.

showing on SEPTEMBER 12 to 20
Robinsons Movieworld Galleria

ERMITA

Ticket Price: [illegible]

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:25 10:00

2 FOSTER CHILD
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 UNDERDOG
10:25 12:25 2:25 4:25 6:25 8:25 10:00

4 DISTURBIA
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:25 10:00

5 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:25 10:00

6 THE BRAVE ONE
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

7 SKINWALKERS / 1408
10:10 12:00 2:00 4:00 / 6:00 8:00 10:00

Watch LIVE via SATELLITE

Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA • MANILA
METRO EAST

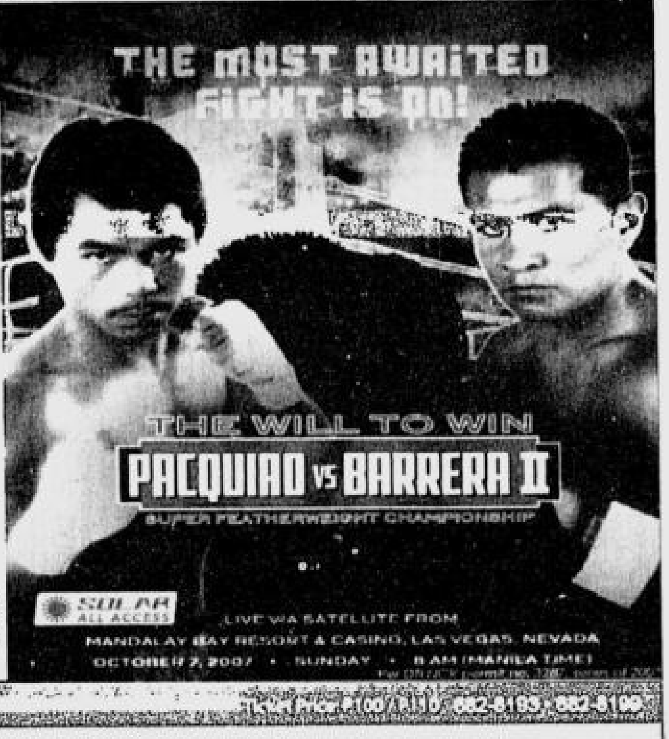
OCTOBER 7 • Sunday 8:00AM

TICKET PRICE: P600

FREE hotdog, popcorn and drink for every ticket purchased

TICKETS are available at the ticket booth

For inquiries, pls. call the Marketing Services Dept. 395-2188 locs. 230 / 240


THE MOST AWAITED FIGHT IS ON!
THE WILL TO WIN
PACQUIAO vs BARRERA II
SUPER FEATHERWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP
SOLAR ALL ACCESS
LIVE VIA SATELLITE FROM
MANDALAY BAY RESORT & CASINO, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
OCTOBER 7, 2007 • SUNDAY • 8 AM (MANILA TIME)

METRO EAST

Ticket Price P100/P110 682-8193, 682-8199

1 DAY WATCH
12:45 3:30 6:15 9:00

2 UNDERDOG
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

3 THE BRAVE ONE
12:45 3:30 6:15 9:00

4 1408
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00

5 RUSH HOUR 3
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

6 DISTURBIA
12:30 2:40 4:50 6:50 9:00

7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10

8 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10

NOVALICHES

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 DAYWATCH

PIONEER

Ticket Price P100 / P110 687-6378

1 ROGUE ASSASSIIN
1:10 3:35 6:00 8:25

2 UNDERDOG
12:25 2:30 4:35 6:40 8:40

3 THE BRAVE ONE
12:00 2:45 5:30 8:15

4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30

STA. ROSA

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (049) 837-0907

1 THE LAST LEGION / SIGNOS
2 UNDERDOG
3 SINKING Of JAPAN
4 THE BRAVE ONE

LIPA

Ticket Price: P90 (043) 757-3884 (043) 312-5870

1 UNDERDOG
2 THE INVASION
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 RUSH HOUR 3

DASMARIÑAS

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (048) 416-4332

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 SIGNOS
4 DAYWATCH

IMUS

Ticket Price P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 DAYWATCH

ANGELES

Ticket Price: P90 / P95 (045) 892-2340

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 HAIRSPRAY
4 DISTURBIA

TARLAC

1 SINKING of JAPAN
2 A LOVE STORY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY

STARMILLS

Ticket Price P80 / P90 (045) 875-1224

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 SIGNOS
4 HAIRSPRAY
5 DISTURBIA
6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD

Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0469

1 UNDERDOG
2 1408
3 THE INVASION
4 SINKING of JAPAN
5 PLANET TERROR
6 SIGNOS

ILOILO

Ticket Price: P70.50 / P80.50 (033) 336-8070

1 UNDERDOG
2 1408
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 THE INVASION
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 SIGNOS

'Unknowns' rule…

From page D4

boys who bumblingly try to deal with their lusts and insecurities in the course of one staggeringly humiliating night.

So, aside from the gonzo appeal of its new leads' performances, the movie clicked be-

cause
youth
movie
"gross
cause

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SHARE A MOVIE WITH A LOVED ONE

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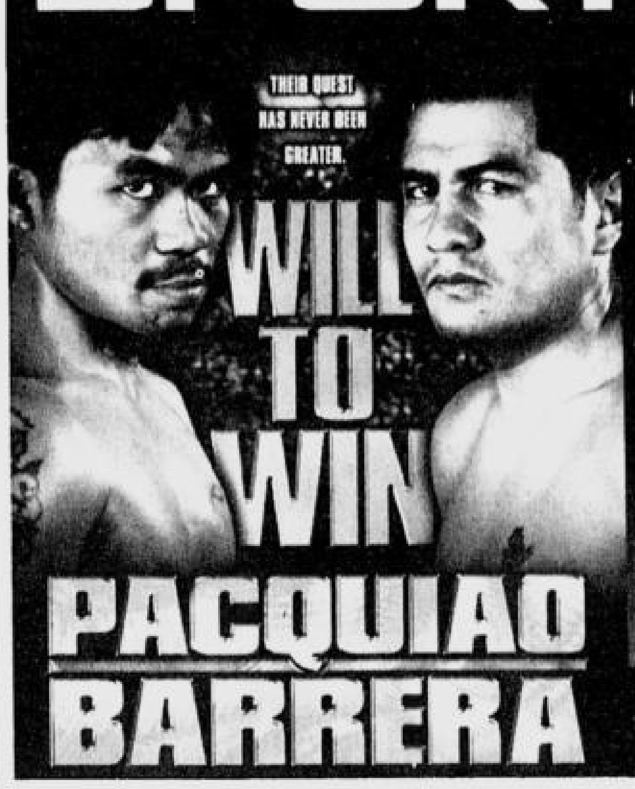
THEIR QUEST HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER.
WILL TO WIN
PACQUIAO
BARRERA

Watch our country's very own Manny Pacquiao collide with Marco Antonio Barrera in a 12-round super featherweight fight on the big screen

October 7 (Sunday)
8:00 a.m.
All SM Cinemas nationwide

Live via satellite with no commercial breaks from Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!

P 500 (Reserved Seats)
P 400 (Guaranteed Seats)

Price adjustments and seating status may vary per branch
Call or visit your favorite SM Cinema branch for more information

GOLDEN BOY TOP RANK SOLAR ALL ACCESS

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104

SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX

DEEP SEA 3D Admission Price: P250
1:00 PM • 2:30PM • 5:30 PM • 7:00 PM • 8:30PM

T-REX Admission Price:
4:00 PM P200

1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 DISTURBIA
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
4 1408
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
6 RUSH HOUR 3

PREMIERE CINEMA
ROGUE ASSASSIN

CENTERSTAGE
UNDERDOG

DIRECTOR'S CLUB
Bookings now accepted. Inquire at 556-2314.

THE PODIUM

CINEMA 1
THE BRAVE ONE

CINEMA 2
UNDERDOG

For ticket reservations, dial 6338976
All major credit cards accepted

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452

1 UNDERDOG
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 FOSTER CHILD
6 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
8 A LOVE STORY
9 SKINWALKER
10 EVAN ALMIGHTY
11 ANINO NG SETYEMBRE
12 1408

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 SKINWALKERS
5 UNDERDOG
6 THE BRAVE ONE
7 EVAN ALMIGHTY
8 A LOVE STORY
9 1408
10 ROGUE ASSASSIN
11 INVASION
12 DISTURBIA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 1408
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 THE BRAVE ONE
7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
8 A LOVE STORY
9 SKINWALKERS
10 DAYWATCH/RUSH HOUR 3
11 UNDERDOG
12 SKINWALKERS

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 UNDERDOG
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
5 1408
6 SKINWALKERS
7 DISTURBIA
8 EVAN ALMIGHTY
9 A LOVE STORY
10 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
3 1408
4 A LOVE STORY/CARTOON NETWORK
5 THE BRAVE ONE
6 UNDERDOG

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
4 THE BRAVE ONE
5 SKINWALKERS
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
7 1408
8 A LOVE STORY
9 [illegible]

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 NANCY DREW
3 UNDERDOG
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
3 CARTOON NETWORK/ANINO NG SETYEMBRE
4 1408
5 UNDERDOG
6 ROGUE ASSASSIN
7 GANDHI, MY FATHER/EVAN ALMIGHTY
8 FOSTER CHILD
9 DISTURBIA
10 A LOVE STORY
11 RUSH HOUR 3
12 SKINWALKERS

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 DAYWATCH
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 UNDERDOG

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 UNDERDOG
4 DISTURBIA

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 DAYWATCH
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 UNDERDOG

LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868

1 1408
2 SKINWALKERS
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 THE BRAVE ONE
5 UNDERDOG
6 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
7 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
8 A LOVE STORY

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 1408
4 RUSH HOUR 3
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 A LOVE STORY

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 1408
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 UNDERDOG
4 DISTURBIA

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 INVASION
2 UNDERDOG
3 HAIRSPRAY
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85

1 UNDERDOG
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 FOSTER CHILD/CARTOON NETWORK
5 A LOVE STORY
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

SM CITY LIPA (043) 784-0187

1 A LOVE STORY
2 INVASION
3 UNDERDOG
4 THE LAST LEGION

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 UNDERDOG
2 A LOVE STORY
3 INVASION
4 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 INVASION
3 UNDERDOG
4 RUSH HOUR 3

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 UNDERDOG
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
4 THE BRAVE ONE

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811

1 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 UNDERDOG
4 1408

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 A LOVE STORY
4 ANINO NG SETYEMBRE/RUSH HOUR 3
5 RISE/BOURNE ULTIMATUM
6 INVASION

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884

1 UNDERDOG
2 1408
3 INVASION
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 HAIRSPRAY
2 INVASION
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 UNDERDOG
5 1408
6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
7 RESERVED
8 THE LAST LEGION

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 DISTURBIA
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 UNDERDOG
5 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
6 FOSTER CHILD
7 A LOVE STORY
8 CARTOON NETWORK/ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010

1 UNDERDOG
2 INVASION
3 SINKING OF JAPAN
4 1408

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA t was clearly targeted at the huge film market, which dominate the world these days. In addition, its humor delights this age sector be- plays directly to its defiance of traditionally conservative behavioral norms.

For these and other reasons, "Superbad" ended up doing super *good* business at the tills on its opening week—and went on to top the box office for a second week.

Actually, "Sleeper" hits like the "no-star" "Superbad" are still the exceptions, and many more productions continue to bank on expensive star value. But, "Superbad" reminds producers that they should pay more attention to *other* ways to interest viewers in their movies, like empathetic stories, choosing the right material for a specific market sector—and, of course, new talents just waiting for their big break.

ONE UNSTOPPABLE FORCE. ONE IMMOVABLE OBJECT.
ONE INCONCEIVABLE EVENT.
JET LI AND JASON STATHAM
NO LAW.
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NO RETREAT.
NO SURRENDER.
NOW SHOWING
VIVA
ROGUE ASSASSIN

Araneta Center
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ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY
EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

THE BRAVE ONE
1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 10:00

ROUGE ASSASSIN
1:55 / 4:30 / 7:05 / 9:40

DAY WATCH
12:20 / 4:55 / 9:40

1408
2:30 / 7:10

UNDERDOG
1:40 / 3:40 / 5:40 / 7:40 / 9:40

I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30

NANCY DREW
2:55 / 7:30

DISTURBIA
12:10 / 4:50 / 9:30

A LOVE STORY
1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40

THE BRAVE ONE
1:00 / 3:40 / 6:20 / 9:00

MALL CINEMAS
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ROUGE ASSASSIN
12:10 / 2:55 / 5:30 / 8:05

I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
12:45 / 3:15 / 5:45 / 8:15

THE BRAVE ONE
12:00 / 2:40 / 5:20 / 8:00

ARANETA COLISEUM
www.aranetacoliseum.com

NCAA FINALS
September 19 , Wednesday
2pm CSJL vs SSC-R Jrs / 4pm CSJL vs SBC Srs

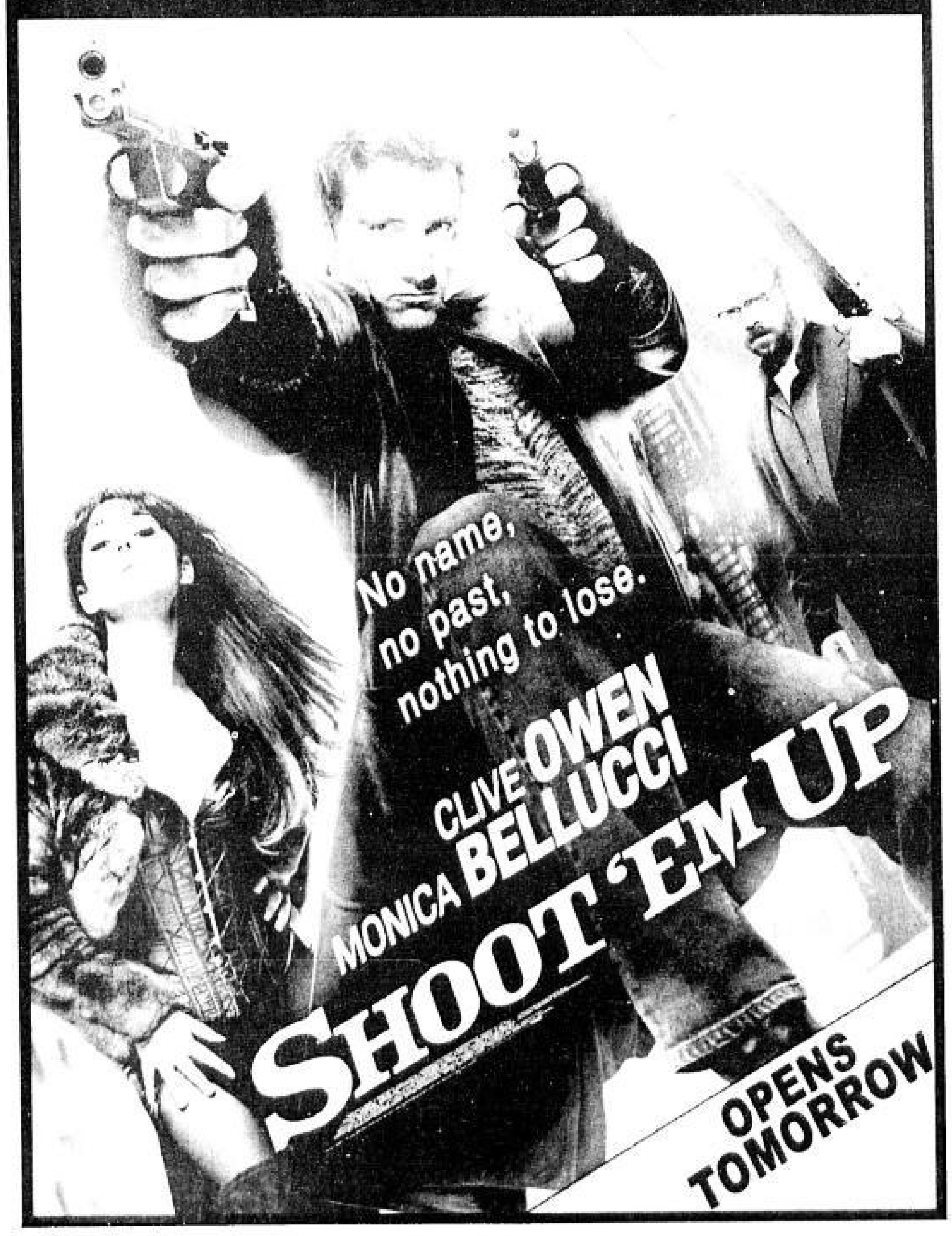
FALL OUT BOY
September 20 & 21, 8pm

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

"Some of this stuff is so out there, YOU'LL HAVE TO SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT!"
~Pete Hammond, *MAXIM*

"This NEW BREED of action thriller HITS THE BULL'S EYE."
~Stephen Rebello, *PLAYBOY*

"This is a WET DREAM for ACTION JUNKIES."
~Peter Travers, *Rolling Stone*



GREENHILLS CINEMAS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1
ROUGE ASSASIN
11:00 , 1:20 , 3:40
6:00 , 8:20 , 10:35
R-13

CINEMA 2
NANCY DREW // DISTURBIA
11:10 , 1:30 , 3:50 // 5:55 , 8:15 , 10:35
GP / PG-13

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND • EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
....a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3
I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
11:00 , 1:20 , 3:40
6:00 , 8:20 , 10:35
R-13

CINEMA 4
UNDERDOG
11:05 , 1:15 , 3:25
5:35 , 7:45 , 10:00
GP

CINEMA 5
THE BRAVE ONE
10:45 , 1:35 , 4:25
7:15 , 10:00
R-13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

September 22 , 2007	Jett Pangan, Michael De Mesa, Ricky Davao	8:00 PM
September 29, 2007	Sugarfree	8:00 PM
October 08 & 09 2007	" Alamat " Stageplay	[illegible]
October 12 & 13 , 2007	Apo Hiking Society	8:00 PM

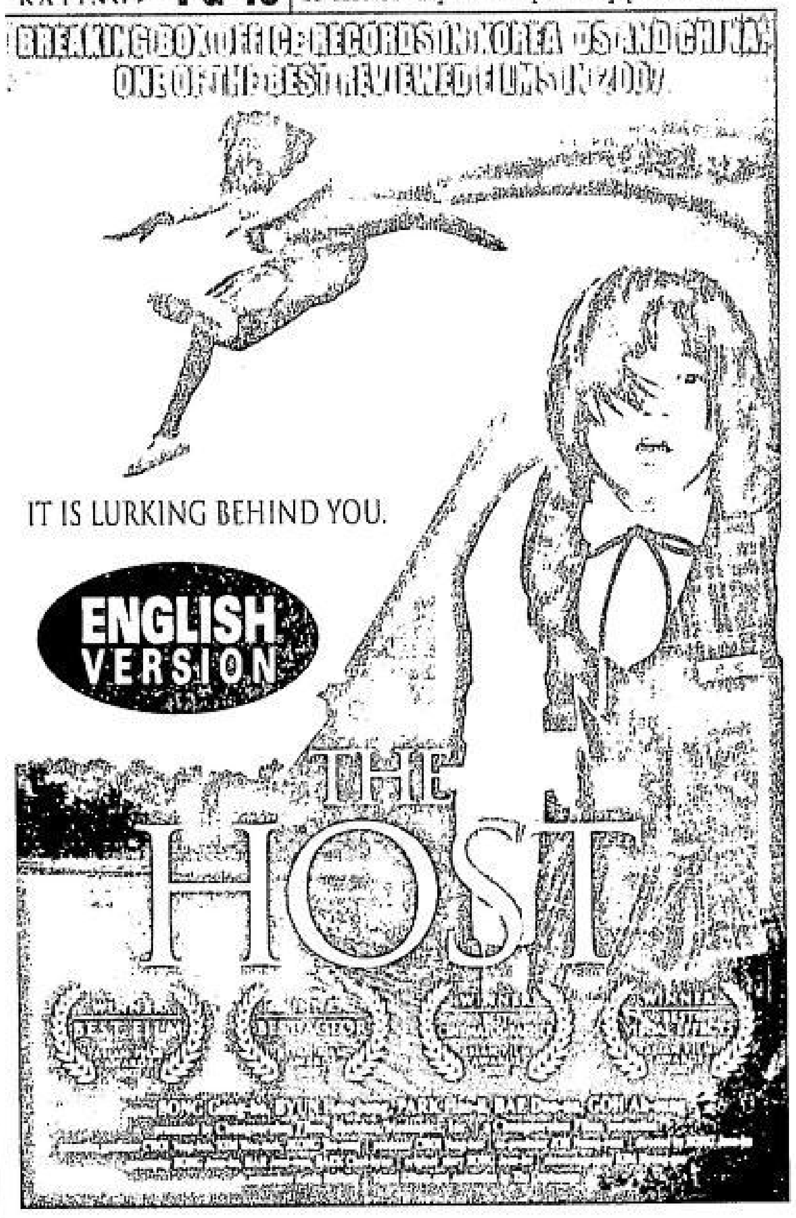
TEATRINO
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

Sept 21 , 28 , 2007	Drag - Ons	10:00 PM
Sep. 12 26 , 27 Oct 3 , 10 , 17 , 24 , 31	Cerrudo Classico	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116

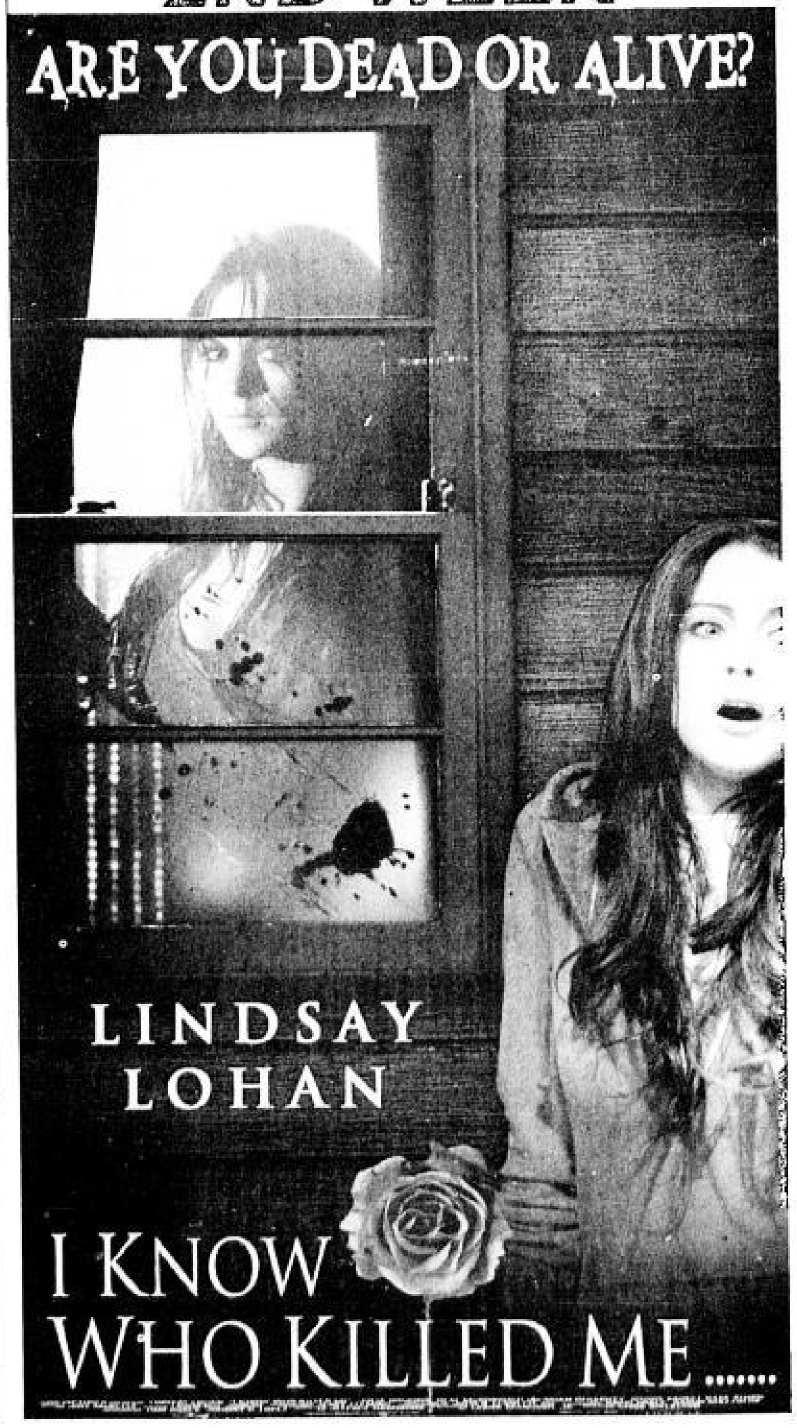
OPENS TOMORROW

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below thirteen (13) years of age shall be allowed only if accompanied by parent or adult


BREAKING BOX OFFICE RECORDS IN KOREA US AND CHINA
ONE OF THE BEST REVIEWED FILMS IN 2007
IT IS LURKING BEHIND YOU.
ENGLISH VERSION
THE HOST

MTRCB RATING R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE

2ND WEEK


ARE YOU DEAD OR ALIVE?
LINDSAY LOHAN
I KNOW WHO KILLED ME......

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
6th Floor Shangri-la Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: 633 2227 - 6337851 loc. 171

1 UNDERDOG
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 ROGUE ASSASIN
4 DISTURBIA

PREMIERE
UNDERDOG
NANCY DREW

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 836.4214 / 836.4216

1 UNDERDOG
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 DISTURBIA
4 ROGUE ASSASIN

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3 UNDERDOG
4 I KNOW WHO KILL ME
5 PLEASE CALL

metropolis star
www.clickliecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 6433994

1 UNDERDOG
2 ROGUE ASSASIN
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 I KNOW WHO KILL ME

THEATRES

1 THE INVASION
2 RISE
3 SINKING JAPAN

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271

1 UNDERDOG
2 THE INVASION
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 1408
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 I KNOW WHO KILL ME
4 UNDERDOG
5 ROGUE ASSASIN
6 UNDERDOG
7 THE BRAVE ONE
8 A LOVE STORY
THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM / DISTURBIA
RUSH HOUR - 3 / SKINWALKERS

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 SKINWALKERS
3 UNDERDOG
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 THE BRBRAVE ONE
5 UNDERDOG

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 DAY WATCH
2 LAST LEGION
3 THE INVASION
4 CHOPSOUEY

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 UNDERDOG
2 ROGUE ASSASIN
3 I KNOW WHO KILL ME

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue
(Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1 UNDERDOG
2 THE INVASION

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 UNDERDOG
2 ROGUE ASSASIN
3 DON'T LOOK BACK
4 HAIRSPRAY

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 SINKING JAPAN
2 1408

PLATINUM CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687 6963 or 72

1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 DISTURBIA
3 UNDERDOG
4 ROGUE ASSASIN

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 THE BRBRAVE ONE
2 THE INVASION
3 UNDERDOG
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel. (049) 4111146

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 SIGNOS
2 PLANET TERROR
3 SINKING JAPAN

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 FRACTURE
2 SIGNOS
3 SINKING JAPAN
4 THREE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 LICENSE TO WED / THE INVASION
2 UNDERDOG
3 RISE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1 THE INVASION
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1 DON'T LOOK BACK
2 LAST LEGION

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 SKINWALKERS
2 MALAGKIT
3 ITLOG
4 LAST LEGION

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 THE INVASION
2 TAGOS SA LAMAN
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 LAST LEGION
5 UNDERDOG

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 LAST LEGION
2 THE INVASION
3 DON'T LOOK BACK
4 UNDERDOG

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 TUMITIBOK
2 BATANG MAGDALENA

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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RASPBERRY
BLACK CURRANT
FRAPPUCCINO® BLENDED JUICE DRINK

ADAMSANDLER
KEVINJAMES

Chuck has just found the perfect girl.
Too bad he's agreed to marry
his best friend

I NOW
PRONOUNCE
YOU
CHUCK
AND
LARRY

OPENS TOMORROW

POWER PLANT CINEMA

ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

DISTURBIA PG13 1:00,3:15,5:30, 7:45,10:00	I KNOW WHO KILLED ME R13 1:00,3:20,5:40, 8:00,10:20	UNDERDOG G 1:10,3:10,5:10, 7:10,9:10
ROGUE ASSASSIN R13 1:50,4:00,6:10, 8:20,10:30	NANCY DREW G 2:30,4:40,6:50,9:00	THE BRAVE ONE R13 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX

① UNDERDOG
MTRCB GP 1:20, 3:30,
5:40, 7:50, 10:00

② THE BRAVE ONE
MTRCB R-13 2:00,
4:40, 7:20, 10:00

③ ROGUE ASSASSIN
MTRCB R-13
2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30

④ DISTURBIA
MTRCB PG-13 12:20,
2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE NANCY DREW (GP)
2:00, 4:10, 6:20, 8:30

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the **Cineplex Special**

The Most Awaited Fight is On!
The Will to Win "PACQUIAO vs BARRERA"
Super Featherweight Championship
on OCTOBER 7, 2007 (SUNDAY) - 8:00 AM (MANILA TIME)
Live Via Satellite from
Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada
Cinema Gates Open at 7:00 AM - Ticket Price : P 600.00

6th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 633-7851, loc. 171/ 170 or 633-2227
for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

'Unknowns' rule box office

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

FOR A LONG TIME NOW, MOVIE PRODUCERS have banked on "star value" to boost their new films' chances at the tills. They "know" from experience that many movie fans watch a movie partly or even mainly because of the stars who top-bill it.

For this reason, producers pay the film world's most popular superstars as much as $25 million per movie, "knowing" full well that, if things go as planned, their hefty investment in star value would result in many more tens and even hundreds of millions of dollars earned at the box office.

We put "know" in quotes, because some developments indicate that star value is no longer reliable insurance for coming up with a hit film. Action superstars like **Sylvester Stallone** and **Arnold Schwarzenegger** have come up with embarrassing flops.

Most recently, the most instructive square-off between "stars" and "non-star" productions took place: **Nicole Kidman**, a popular movie luminary, top-billed the sci-fi thriller, "Invasion," while a small film titled "Superbad" also started its run, fielding a cast of smaller names and downright unknowns.

The result? Their opening weekend box office takes say it all: "Superbad" shocked everyone by making more than $20 million, while "Invasion" barely squeezed through with $6 million. What happened? Kidman was no slouch in "Invasion," giving it her level dramatic best—so, why did viewers generally eschew her latest starrer in favor of the much less heralded "Superbad"? The sleeper hit turns out to be a zany teen flick about socially inept teenage

UNKNOWNS/ D2

AT THE CINEMAS

THX

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

GLORIETTA 1	1 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	2 ROGUE ASSASIN	3 THE BRAVE ONE	4 UNDERDOG
GLORIETTA 4	1 UNDERDOG	2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	3 THX THE BRAVE ONE GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 NANCY DREW / THE INVASION	5 DISTURBIA	6 ROGUE ASSASIN	7 1408
GREENBELT 1	1 ROGUE ASSASIN	2 THE BRAVE ONE		
GREENBELT 3	1 THX ROGUE ASSASIN GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE BRAVE ONE GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 DISTURBIA GUARANTEED SEATS	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME GUARANTEED SEATS	5 UNDERDOG GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE BRAVE ONE	2 ROGUE ASSASIN		
	3 UNDERDOG	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	5 DISTURBIA	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 DISTURBIA	2 UNDERDOG	3 PAN'S LABYRINTH	4 1408
MARKET! MARKET!	1 ROGUE ASSASIN	2 1408		
	3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	4 THE BRAVE ONE	5 UNDERDOG	
TRINOMA • THX Certified • All-Digital Sound • All-Stadium Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	2 DISTURBIA	3 UNDERDOG GUARANTEED SEATS	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 1408	6 ROGUE ASSASIN	7 THX THE BRAVE ONE GUARANTEED SEATS	

EXCLUSIVE

OPENS TOMORROW
AT GLORIETTA 4
and GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS

"A superbly crafted psychological thriller."
Owen Gleiberman, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

"A brilliant house-horror tale with Hitchcockean flair."
Duane Byrge, THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

Sam Rockwell Vera Farmiga
joshua
Not all children are innocent.

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

glorietta	Martin Nievera's Album Launch September 19, 2007; 6 PM at the Activity Center
GREENBELT	Greenbelt 5 Sneak Peek Presents: Collection of Kate Torralba September 12 to 23, 2007 at Greenbelt 3 Lobby
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Philippine Robotics September 17 to 19, 2007 at the Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Elliot Yamin of American Idol Live! September 26; 6 PM; OnStage (Cinema 1)
MARKET! MARKET!	Health & Beauty Outlet Sale September 17 to 20, 2007 at the Activity Center
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	Pioneers of Philippine Art: Transnationalism in the Late 19th - 20th century June 15, 2007 to January 6, 2008 at the 3rd Floor Gallery For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Samsung Exhibit An exhibit of the latest Samsung mobile phones September 14 to 16; 10am to 9 pm; Starbucks / Food Choices Level 2

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Featuring:
The Angfourgettables with The UP Concert Chorus
at the TriNoma Park (4th Level)
on September 22, 7pm

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma